



★★★★ United States Senator for Ohio ★★★★★

Sherrod Brown



Report to Ohioans 2013



Sen. Brown joins Ohio veterans aboard the USS Cod to announce his *All-American Flag Act* legislation.



Sen. Brown visits the General Motors Powertrain plant in Toledo and discusses how to keep manufacturing jobs in Ohio.



Sen. Brown meets with veterans in Hamilton County and addresses the VA Backlog.



Sen. Brown meets with restaurant workers in Youngstown about raising the federal minimum wage.

Mission

Sherrod Brown fights for the middle class because he believes that everyone who works hard and plays by the rules should be able to get ahead.

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Message from Sen. Brown

Fellow Ohioans,

President Lincoln would meet regularly in the White House with ordinary Americans, even during the darkest days of the war. He called these meetings his “public opinion baths.”

That’s why I have traveled to all of Ohio’s 88 counties and met with people from different backgrounds. You’ve shared your stories and suggested ways that we can work together to strengthen our state.

This report chronicles our work together in 2013.

We focused on two of Ohio’s most important sectors: manufacturing and agriculture.

Agriculture and food production is Ohio’s number one industry, supporting one in seven jobs. That’s why as the first Ohioan to serve on the Senate Agriculture Committee in more than four decades, I was proud to represent Ohio on the House-Senate Conference Committee to ensure we passed a strong Farm Bill.

In this Farm Bill, we were able to continue to support farmers—but also reform programs where needed. This five-year, comprehensive Farm Bill saves taxpayers \$23 billion, while also creating jobs, boosting rural development, and investing in biobased manufacturing.

Our nation’s economic strength is also tied to a strong manufacturing sector—and we should be doing everything we can to support American manufacturing.

That means creating a national manufacturing strategy that puts American workers first and trains Ohioans for 21st century jobs.

I introduced bipartisan legislation to create a *National Network of Manufacturing Innovation (NNMI)*, using America Makes, an abandoned warehouse in Youngstown that has been transformed into a center for 21st century technology, as a blueprint.

Collaboration is critical for our success— and a NNMI would provide small businesses and research institutions access to the tools and expertise needed to compete in the global economy.

There is more work ahead of us.

Many of you have joined me in calling for a higher federal minimum wage and extending unemployment insurance. We know this economy is improving, but not fast enough.

Men and women who once had good-paying factory jobs with benefits are now working low wage jobs with no benefits. And those who lost their job, through no fault of their own, are now

struggling to survive without unemployment insurance— *social insurance*— while they look for work.

For millions of seniors, Social Security has meant food on the table and a roof over their head. For our nation, Social Security has meant a lower poverty rate.

But even though Social Security is operating at a surplus and is funded separately from the rest of the government, extreme politicians use every budget impasse as an opportunity to, as they say, “reform entitlements.”

That’s why I cosponsored the *Strengthening Social Security Act of 2013*, which would extend Social Security’s surplus and benefit our seniors.

I believe that Ohioans who work hard and take responsibility should be able to pay their bills, feed their families, and create a better future for their children.

That’s why I’ll keep fighting for a living wage and unemployment insurance for all Ohioans and to protect Social Security for seniors

In 2014, we must continue to focus on job creation and economic recovery. As another year begins, I remain honored and humbled to serve and will continue to fight for Ohio’s middle class.

Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown
U.S. Senator

Sen. Brown is Here to Serve You:

Constituent Services

One of Sen. Brown's most important responsibilities is to provide information and assistance to the people of Ohio. He is committed to listening to Ohioans, assisting Ohioans who have encountered difficulties with federal matters, and providing other constituent services. Please contact any of Sen. Brown's offices if there is any way he can be of assistance to you or help someone you know.

Listening to Ohioans

Sen. Brown has held more than 200 roundtable discussions in all 88 of Ohio's counties. He also holds regular conference calls with constituent groups, hosts Thursday morning coffees with constituents in the Capitol, and responds to every letter and email he receives.



Constituent Coffees

Ohio constituents visiting Washington, D.C. are invited to Sen. Brown's weekly constituent coffee. Sen. Brown and his staff hold these coffees to stay in touch with Ohioans, welcome them to Washington, and get feedback on his work. For more information, please visit Sen. Brown's website: <http://brown.senate.gov>.



Correspondence

Sen. Brown places a high priority on prompt and accurate responses to letters, emails, and calls from constituents. In 2013, Sen. Brown's office received and responded to more than 475,000 emails and letters from Ohioans. To send your comments to Sen. Brown, please visit his website: <http://brown.senate.gov>.

Assisting Ohioans with Federal Matters

Sen. Brown is committed to assisting Ohioans who have encountered difficulties with federal matters. Ohioans can call Sen. Brown's state offices and work directly with a constituent services representative to obtain information or resolve an issue they are having with a federal agency. Common areas of inquiry include: Social Security and Medicare benefits, veterans' benefits, military service issues, passport or visa problems, housing matters, IRS issues, and more.

Please note: Sen. Brown's office can only provide assistance on federal matters.

When appropriate, Sen. Brown's office can help identify and locate state and local services.

Helping Ohioans with Social Security

Social Security provides critical support to millions of Ohio seniors, families, and individuals with disabilities. It provides guaranteed monthly income for disabled workers and surviving family members. Sen. Brown's office can often assist Ohioans having difficulty with the claims process.

For example, a Wood County resident wrote to Sen. Brown regarding her disability claim. The constituent's request for an administrative law judge hearing had, up to that point, not been fulfilled due to a hearings backlog. Sen. Brown's staff worked to resolve the situation, forwarding her appeal to the Office of Disability Adjudication and Review (ODAR), who, upon reviewing the constituent's information, scheduled a hearing on her behalf. The constituent later notified Sen. Brown's office that she had received a favorable determination in her case.

Assisting Ohioans with Medicare

Sen. Brown has heard from many Ohio seniors struggling with rising health care and prescription drug costs. Ohio seniors shouldn't have to worry about how they're going to pay for care, nor should they struggle with applying for the vital resources Medicare provides. When a constituent



contacted Sen. Brown and detailed his difficulties enrolling in Medicare Parts B and D, Sen. Brown's staff got involved. The Ohioan had tried to enroll online and over the phone with no success and needed to be signed-up in order for his retirement pension to carry medical benefits. Sen. Brown's staff forwarded his Request for Assistance to his local Social Security office, where officials confirmed they were able to assist the constituent with his Medicare enrollment.

Helping Ohio Veterans and Military Families Access Benefits

Sen. Brown, a member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, has worked on behalf of Ohioans to reduce VA benefit disparities and address the claims backlog. He and members of his staff have participated in events across the state, listening to VA officials and veterans discuss the effects of the backlog and the progress of backlog reduction efforts. Sen. Brown's

office has also helped individual Ohio veterans and military families access the benefits they have earned and deserve.

For example, an Air Force reservist from Huron County applied for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits in late 2011 and was denied, a problem he worked to resolve for more than a year. After numerous setbacks and resubmissions, he contacted Sen. Brown's office. Sen. Brown's staff was able to have the VA's St. Louis Education Office locate all of his paperwork, resolve his case, and generate an approval letter within 3 hours. The constituent received his pay 5 days later.

In mid-October, an Ohio Army reservist received the final installment of his enlistment bonus as scheduled. The \$5,000 was deposited directly into his bank account, but was "recalled" four days later by Defense Finance and Accounting Services on account of the government shutdown. Sen. Brown's office contacted the Army on his behalf and the money was restored to his account the same day.

Obtaining Overdue or Replacement Medals for Ohio Veterans

Securing overdue or lost medals is a small but significant way to honor Ohio's veterans for the work they have undertaken on our behalf and serves as an inspiration to future generations from our state. Sen. Brown and his staff are honored to present many Ohio veterans and their family members with these well-deserved decorations.

In 2013, Sen. Brown helped more than 400 Ohio veterans and their families locate military service records and obtain overdue or replacement medals. Sen. Brown's office also assisted in securing 12 new Bronze Star Medals, two new Air Medals, and six new Purple Heart medals for Ohio's veterans. For instance, a World War II veteran from Cuyahoga County was awarded a



Montford Point Congressional Medal for being one of the first African-Americans to serve in the Marine Corps. In June, Sen. Brown had the privilege of presenting over 150 medals to members of the National Guard from Southwestern Ohio who had never received the medals they earned during their deployment to Iraq. And in October, with the assistance of the Huron County Veterans Service Commission, Sen. Brown presented medals to several World War II and Korean War veterans from Huron County.

Sen. Brown encourages any veteran who thinks he or she may be entitled to overdue or replacement medals—or has any other question or needs assistance with the VA—to contact his office. Ohio veterans and family members of deceased veterans may request military records and medals by contacting Sen. Brown's Cleveland office at 216-522-7272 or toll-free at 888-896-6446.

Protecting Ohio Consumers

Sen. Brown, chairman of the Senate Banking Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection, is committed to making the financial system work for all Americans. While citizens struggle to make ends meet, consumers must have the resources necessary to remain protected against unscrupulous and harmful banking practices. Sen. Brown's staff is here to assist Ohioans struggling with financial services.

For example, a Montgomery County constituent contacted Sen. Brown's office because she was having difficulty obtaining a home loan modification from her bank. Sen. Brown's staff sent an inquiry on her behalf to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, who discovered that the bank had mistakenly denied her a trial plan in 2010. The bank compensated the constituent for the mistake and ultimately modified her mortgage.

Ohioans who have a banking complaint are encouraged to contact Sen. Brown's office or contact the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). The CFPB seeks to bring oversight and transparency to checking accounts, credit cards, mortgages, credit reporting, and private student loans. You can submit a complaint to the CFPB if you have experienced difficulties with a financial product by visiting www.ConsumerFinance.gov or by calling 855-411-2372.

Other Services for Constituents

Flag Requests

If you'd like to have an American flag flown over the U.S. Capitol Building to commemorate a special occasion such as a birthday, retirement, or anniversary, my staff can assist you. Flags flown over the Capitol Building are accompanied by a certificate of authenticity from the Architect of the Capitol stating the name of the person or organization the flag was flown for, the date, and the occasion. Please be aware that mail processes can often delay flag forms sent to Sen. Brown's offices, so we recommend that you submit your flag request up to six weeks in advance of your desired delivery date. For prices and information on purchasing flags, please visit Sen. Brown's website or contact his office.

Military Academy Nominations

Each year, Sen. Brown has the opportunity to nominate outstanding students to attend the Air Force Academy, the United States Military Academy, the Naval Academy, and the Merchant Marine Academy. Interested individuals should request an application in the spring of their junior year of high school. Additional information about the nominations process is available on Sen. Brown's website.

Visiting Washington, D.C.

If you are planning a trip to our nation's capital, we would like to help you make the most of your stay. My staff may be able to coordinate tours for your group at the following locations: The United States Capitol Building, Library of Congress, Supreme Court, and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. While every effort will be made to accommodate your tour request, due to limited availability and heightened security we ask that you let us know about your trip at least three months in advance of your arrival. The easiest way to request a tour is to visit Sen. Brown's website. If you have any questions please call his Washington office. Sen. Brown invites visiting Ohioans to stop by for coffee in Washington, D.C. Each Thursday, when the U.S. Senate is in session, Sen. Brown and his staff meet with Ohio constituents from 8:30 a.m. to 9:15 a.m. The location of these informal sessions changes often, so please visit brown.senate.gov or my Washington office for the latest information.

Internships

Students considering a future in public service may be interested in interning for Sen. Brown in Washington, D.C. or in one of his Ohio offices. Internships can last several weeks during the summer or a full semester during the school year. Preference is given to students from Ohio or attending school in Ohio, and have completed at least one semester of college. To apply for an internship, please visit Sen. Brown's website or contact one of his offices directly.

For more information, please visit Sen. Brown's website:
http://brown.senate.gov/ohio/constituent_services

Regional Highlights

Sen. Brown and his staff are involved in an array of projects and activities across the state to improve the lives of Ohioans. The following pages provide an overview of 2013 project highlights in each region of the state.

Appalachian Ohio Regional Highlights

Creating Jobs and Promoting Economic Development

Advancing the American Centrifuge Project in Piketon

In 2012, Sen. Brown led the bicameral, bipartisan effort to put Piketon's American Centrifuge Project (ACP) in the strongest possible position to receive a loan guarantee from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). As a result of his efforts, Congress approved \$100 million for the centrifuge project in September 2012 and \$150 million as part of the *National Defense Authorization Act* passed in December 2012. Both of these victories put the Piketon Plant closer to receiving a DOE Loan Guarantee.

Sen. Brown also led the effort to include \$150 million in DOE resources for the research, development, and demonstration (RD&D) program in the Senate-passed highway bill. The provision provided resources to help ensure that the ACP is in the strongest position possible to receive a loan guarantee. The RD&D funding will keep Ohioans at work, expedite commercialization of ACP technology, and protect our national security. President Obama's budget, proposed in 2013, included \$150 million in RD&D funds for the ACP for Fiscal Year 2013.

Continuing the Fight to Ensure Support of Piketon Cleanup

Sen. Brown urged President Obama to commit resources to the continuation of cleanup work in Piketon as a part of the Administration's Fiscal Year 2015 budget. In his letter to President Obama, Sen. Brown urged that Department of Energy resources be committed to help spur economic growth in Portsmouth and Southern Ohio.

Due to his efforts, \$137 million in direct funding was allocated to the Piketon Plant, which employs more than 2,200 people.

2013 also marked the fifth year that the Portsmouth Site Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) has worked towards shaping the future of Piketon by guiding the Department of Energy and better informing the local community. In a [letter to SSAB](#), Sen. Brown thanked and commended the board for its dedication and service.

Federal Resources for Local Economic Development Districts

Sen. Brown announced that a number of Appalachian Ohio Local Development Districts were awarded federal resources to strengthen their regional economies and to create jobs. Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association, Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission, and Buckeye Hills Hocking Valley Regional Development District were each awarded a \$174,495 grant from the U.S. Economic Development Association (EDA) to develop and implement comprehensive economic development strategies (CEDs) for the region. All three Local Development Districts coordinate public-private partnerships to develop economic activity throughout Appalachian Ohio.



“These federal resources will lay the groundwork for small businesses throughout eastern Ohio to have a better shot at creating new opportunities and jobs in small towns and rural areas,” Sen. Brown said. “Small businesses are essential to our economy, and through these awards, local communities and their residents can lead the way in rural economic development.”

Strengthening Efforts to Retain and Grow Manufacturing Jobs in the Buckeye Hills-Hocking Region

Groups like Buckeye Hills-Hocking Valley Regional Development District are working to ensure that jobs stay in Ohio and that Ohio stays at the forefront of innovation. In October, Sen. Brown announced that the Buckeye Hills-Hocking Valley Regional Development District was awarded new federal funds from the Department of Labor’s “Make It in America” Challenge. The Challenge works to create and retain manufacturing jobs by encouraging U.S. businesses to re-shore manufacturing activity, train workers to meet future manufacturing needs, and foster direct foreign investment.

A separate grant from the Economic Development Association (EDA) will help a new strategic plan to create a regional advanced manufacturing innovation hub that will serve a 25-county region. The Ohio State University, Buckeye Hills- Hocking Valley Regional Development District (RDD), Eastgate Regional Council of Governments, Northeast Ohio Four County Regional Planning and Development Organization, and The Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association will work together to develop a strategy to help the region increase competitiveness, economic growth, and job creation. The project is funded through the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP), which is designed to accelerate manufacturing programs and create good-paying jobs in the manufacturing sector.

Bringing Manufacturing Jobs Back to Appalachian Ohio



Sen. Brown also traveled to Hillsboro to discuss workforce development and re-energizing manufacturing during his August visit to PAS Technologies. After touring PAS Technologies, Sen. Brown met with representatives from Southern State Community College and the Turning Point Applied Learning Center. He discussed the *Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act of 2013* and the *Strengthening Employment clusters to Organize Regional Success (SECTORS) Act of 2013*.

“I see part of my job as sitting down with groups of this size to see what kind of things we can do together,” Sen. Brown said.

Producing American-Made Athletic Footwear for Servicemembers in Portsmouth

Taxpayer dollars should support American workers. Our nation’s economic strength is tied to a strong manufacturing sector— and we should be doing everything we can to support American manufacturing.

Currently, the Army, Navy, and Air Force provide cash vouchers to new recruits to purchase athletic footwear, without any preference for domestically manufactured products. Because the Department of Defense (DoD) purchases American-made combat boots, service shoes, and nearly every other uniform type in bulk for initial entry recruits, Sen. Brown called on the DoD to also purchase athletic footwear made here in the United States for our troops.

In a bipartisan letter to President Obama, Sen. Brown and a group of 14 senators urged the DoD to adopt the same “Buy America” policies for athletic footwear that are already in place for combat boots, service shoes, and other uniform items. These policies would support Sole Choice in Portsmouth, which produces the laces for New Balance athletic shoes.

Advocating for Economic Development Initiatives in Appalachia

Strong rural communities demand economic investment and development. That’s why local development districts throughout Appalachian Ohio are so important. In March, Sen. Brown received the 2013 Congressional Award from the Development District Association of Appalachia (DDAA) during a ceremony in Washington and was recognized for his advocacy on behalf of economic development initiatives in Appalachia. The Congressional Award is given annually to one or two Members of Congress who have been identified as strong advocates and supporters of regional economic development.

Protecting Appalachian Jobs and Workers

Preserving Benefits for Hundreds of Retired Coal Miners



Ohio’s coal miners work hard every day and deserve the pensions and health care benefits that they were promised. In March, Sen. Brown introduced the *Coalfield Accountability and Retired Employee Act* to protect the promised lifetime pension and health care benefits of hundreds of retired Ohio coal miners whose livelihoods are in jeopardy.

Some retirees are facing uncertainty due to the underfunding of the United Mine Workers of America’s (UMWA) 1974 pension plan, which is on the road to insolvency after the 2008 financial crisis. The 1974 plan covers more than 100,000 mineworkers, including hundreds of Ohioans. If the plan becomes insolvent, retirees could see reductions in their monthly pension checks. Sen. Brown’s bill seeks to provide certainty and peace of mind to retirees and their families while holding employers accountable for the commitments they make

to their workers. Sen. Brown is one of four cosponsors of the bill along with Sens. Jay Rockefeller and Joe Manchin of West Virginia and Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts.

Helping Small Businesses Grow and Add Jobs

Hosting Fairs for Job Seekers in Cambridge and Steubenville



Hundreds of job seekers attended career fairs hosted by Sen. Brown's office in March and September in Cambridge and Steubenville. His office teamed up with the Cambridge, Carroll, Noble, Tuscarawas, Monroe, Jefferson, Marietta, Coshocton, Harrison, St. Clairsville, and Zanesville-Muskingum Chambers of Commerce and County One-Stop Employment Centers to help qualified workers in Ohio find employment opportunities.

The events featured a diversity of employers, including those in the health care, tourism, construction, transportation, manufacturing, and oil and gas industries. All of the employers in attendance committed to hiring within the following 6 months. Colleges and career centers were also on hand to provide jobseekers with information and advice on available training programs.

Bringing Back Lost Jobs to East Liverpool

East Liverpool was once the undisputed pottery capital of the world. American Mug and Stein is a symbol of both that tradition and of Appalachia's potential for growth.

In August, Sen. Brown toured the American Mug and Stein factory to meet with workers to discuss their efforts to expand and re-shore jobs outsourced to China. In four years, American Mug and Stein has steadily expanded its number of employees and has grown its business more than seven-fold.

In an effort to help the company become more energy and cost efficient, Sen. Brown brought to the tour Tony Logan, Ohio Rural Development Director of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), as well as Joy Padgett, Deputy Director of the Governor's Office of Appalachia (GOA). Also joining them were local community leaders.

Building Appalachian Ohio Infrastructure and Transportation

New Resources for Appalachian Ohio Airports

In July, Sen. Brown was pleased to announce new federal funding to improve airports in Harrison, Columbiana, Guernsey, Jefferson, Muskingum, Scioto, and Ross Counties. The improvements will help to distinguish the airports as important resources in their counties. These federal dollars will go a long way in sustaining travel in and out of the airports for area residents and businesses. Funds will be used to rehabilitate taxiways, improve runways, install perimeter fencing, remove obstructions, replace visual guidance systems, purchase snow removal equipment, and construct new access roads.

The grants were awarded by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Aviation Administration and totaled to almost 1.3 million dollars for the seven counties.

Improving Infrastructure in Vinton, Pike, and Jefferson Counties



Ohio's rural communities and small towns face a heavy burden when financing infrastructure projects. In November, Sen. Brown announced that the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) awarded grants to construct or improve water infrastructure in Vinton, Pike, and Jefferson Counties.

The Village of Zaleski in Vinton County will get a new sewer system, consisting of 14,052 linear feet of sewer line, 62 manholes, and a 30,000 gallon per day (GPD) conventional wastewater treatment plant. The project is expected to provide new sewer service for 139 households in Zaleski while also retaining jobs in the village and enhancing future economic growth.

The Village of Waverly in Pike County is updating water infrastructure and improving service. The ARC awarded a grant to make improvements to the existing wastewater treatment plant. The project will improve service for more than 130 households, providing safe and reliable sanitary sewer services while saving the community money on wastewater treatment services.

Also in Pike County, the Hospital Hill Sanitary Sewer Project will reduce the inflow and infiltration of rain water into the Pike County Sewer District System. This project will replace or repair all main sewer lines, laterals, and manholes throughout the Hospital Hill area. The Hospital Hill Sanitary Sewer project will be a collaborative effort between the Village of Waverly, the Pike County Commissioners, and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

In Jefferson County, the Ohio EPA will use another ARC grant to replace aged and deteriorating water lines in the City of Toronto, providing a more reliable supply of water to 1,994 households and 163 businesses.

Sen. Brown is working to help struggling communities around Ohio afford costly but necessary renovations to sewer systems. Last year, he introduced the *Clean Water Affordability Act* to help communities make renovations to outdated sewer systems while improving water quality and keeping rates affordable for residents and small businesses.

Expanding Access to Broadband for Ohio's Rural Communities

Sen. Brown introduced legislation, the *Connecting Rural America Act*, that would strengthen existing U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs that provide for the construction, improvement, and acquisition of facilities and equipment to provide broadband service to underserved, rural communities. This legislation was included in the Senate Farm Bill and would reauthorize the existing Rural Broadband Loan Program and add a grant component to the program to target funds to the small towns and rural communities that need it most.

With new or increased broadband access, communities can compete on a level playing field to attract new businesses; schools can create distance learning opportunities; medical professionals can provide cost-efficient remote diagnoses and care; and business owners can expand the market for their products beyond their neighborhoods to better compete in the global economy. The investments will create jobs in the short term and help establish a new foundation for long-term economic growth.

During Senate consideration of the Farm Bill, Sen. Brown sponsored an amendment to support rural development, which cleared the Senate with bipartisan support by a vote of 55-44. His amendment would fund critical USDA Rural Development programs that help Ohio communities update wastewater and sewer infrastructure systems, provide access to capital for Ohio agricultural producers and small businesses, and provide technical assistance to beginning farmers and ranchers.



Loan Guarantee to Improve Electric Service in 18 Southern Ohio Counties

Sen. Brown announced the South Central Power Company based in Lancaster was awarded a \$64,000,000 loan guarantee from the USDA Rural Utilities Program to construct new distribution and transmission power lines for use by consumers and businesses in Adams, Brown, Clermont, Clinton, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Highland, Hocking, Licking, Madison, Muskingum, Pike, Ross, Scioto, Perry, Pickaway, and Vinton Counties. Included in the loan is \$6, 370,485 for smart grid projects.

This type of investment in rural Ohio is critical for economic competitiveness and will continue to ensure safe, affordable service for all area residents and businesses.

According to the USDA, this loan guarantee will serve more than 5, 100 consumers through the construction of 558 miles of distribution and 34 miles of transmission line.

Road Improvements in Morgan and Meigs Counties



Morgan Township will receive new federal resources to make roadway improvements. The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) awarded a \$50,000 grant to Morgan Township in Morgan County to provide improved truck traffic access to nearby businesses and improve turning radii on Buttermilk Hill Road, also known as Township Road 275. It is estimated that the project will support the retention of 100 jobs and the creation of five jobs within three years in the Morgan County area. The Ohio Department of Transportation will administer the project and the Federal Highway Administration will serve as the basic federal agency for the project.

The ARC also awarded a grant to the Meigs County Commissioners to construct a road to access the emergency medical building of the Meigs County Health Care Campus. In addition to

providing a key avenue to an emergency-care facility, the new roadway will create an estimated 30 jobs within 180 days of the facility opening.

Supporting Servicemembers, Veterans, and Law Enforcement

Helping Ohio Students Attend Service Academies

Ohio's schools are educating the young people who will become our next generation of military leaders. Each year, Sen. Brown is honored to nominate outstanding students to attend our nation's service academies, including the Air Force Academy, the Naval Academy, the Military Academy at West Point, and the Merchant Marine Academy.

In February, Sen. Brown announced that Zanesville student Jeffrey McKnight received an offer of appointment to the Air Force Academy. In March, Sen. Brown announced that the U.S. Naval Academy extended offers of appointment to Jefferson County Christian School senior Meadow Jackson and Gallia Academy High School graduate Ethan Moore. Sen. Brown nominated all three individuals for these academies. A nomination does not guarantee acceptance into a service academy, but a congressional recommendation is required. The Academy's Admissions Board ultimately decides who receives an appointment.

Providing Critical Services for Veterans in Marietta and Lisbon

Our veterans have been promised that if they defend our country, a grateful nation will provide them with services and benefits they have earned. Sen. Brown was pleased to announce new federal resources that will provide critical support services for homeless and low-income veterans in Marietta and Lisbon. In July, the Community Action Program of Washington-Morgan Counties and the Community Action Agency of Columbiana County, Inc. were awarded a new federal grant from the Department of Veterans Affairs' Supportive Services for Veteran Families program.

Sen. Brown also traveled throughout Ohio in August calling on the VA to make immediate and necessary changes in order to eliminate its backlog of nearly 490,000 claims filed by disabled veterans and their caregivers for services and benefits they have earned. Sen. Brown outlined his plan to prevent and reduce the backlog by working to pass the *Veterans Services Outreach Act* and the *Claims Processing Improvement Act*.

Ensuring Steubenville Servicemembers Find Work at Home

While servicemembers acquire significant training and skills in the military, often these talents are not transferred easily into civilian employment credentials. In fact, the unemployment rate among recent Iraq and Afghanistan veterans is nearly double Ohio's overall unemployment rate.

Sen. Brown, a senior member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, visited Steubenville to outline a plan to reduce unemployment among recently-returned servicemembers and ease their transition into the civilian workforce. At Steubenville's American Legion Post 274, Sen. Brown outlined how the *Troop Talent Act of 2013* will help veterans better utilize the skills they

acquired in the military in order to find full-time employment as they transition back to civilian life.

Honoring a Belmont County Fallen Hero



Sen. Brown applauded the Ohio Department of Transportation for unveiling a road sign that marks a portion of Interstate-70 in Belmont County as the “Staff Sergeant Jesse Ault Memorial Highway,” in remembrance of the Iraq War veteran killed in action five years ago.

“Sergeant Jesse Ault was a patriot who selflessly gave his life for our nation. Nothing we can do can fully honor his contribution to our country’s national security and our freedom, but I applaud paying tribute to his memory by naming a portion of Interstate 70 in his honor,” Sen. Brown said. “In doing so, we can ensure that Sergeant Ault’s service is remembered and appreciated for years to come.”

Sen. Brown wrote a letter to Sergeant Ault’s family that was presented at the ceremony by his regional representative.

The naming of a portion of Interstate-70 was made possible through legislation approved by the Ohio General Assembly.

Strengthening Appalachian Ohio Neighborhoods

Additional Resources for Clean-Up and Recovery Efforts

Severe storms in 2012 left many Ohio families and small businesses hurting. New resources announced in May 2013 will help nearly 20 Ohio counties including: Athens, Belmont, Gallia, Guernsey, Harrison, Hocking, Jackson, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Muskingum, Perry, Vinton, and Washington to continue large-scale clean-up and recovery efforts following severe storms and winds that caused damage across Ohio between June 29 and July 2, 2012. Sen. Brown announced that the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services will receive additional National Emergency Grant funding from the U.S. Department of Labor to support dislocated workers and assist with ongoing clean-up efforts. This funding will help small businesses, families, and communities throughout Southeast Ohio while creating temporary jobs and completing the remaining road repair and debris removal.

“Southeast Ohio small business owners can now access resources needed to recover from last summer’s extreme weather—which may have impacted their business through no fault of their own. This funding will help small businesses, families, and communities throughout Southeast Ohio while putting Ohioans to work,” Sen. Brown said.

New Resources to Improve Ironton Riverfront

Preserving Ironton’s riverfront is important to the city’s recreational and economic future. In April, Sen. Brown announced that the Ironton Riverfront Boat Ramp and Docks in Lawrence County will receive new resources to



update infrastructure and improve boating service. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service awarded a grant through the Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) program to improve the Ironton Riverfront Boat Ramp and Docks. These funds will help ensure that the riverfront is safe for our children and grandchildren to enjoy both now and in the future. The funds can also be used to produce and distribute educational materials about the program and recreational boating.

Equipping New 24-Hour Emergency Room in Meigs County

Ohio's rural communities and small towns face a heavy burden when financing infrastructure projects, including health care facilities. In September, Sen. Brown announced that Meigs County received new resources to expand emergency health care. The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) awarded a grant to the Meigs County Community Improvement Corporation to develop a new 24-hour emergency room, the first in the county. The Meigs County Emergency Room is part of the health care campus that is being developed and is expected to serve 5,000 patients within its first year of operation. This project brings important health care resources to Meigs County and ensures that residents have nearby, 24-hour access to emergency health care facilities.

New Resources for Community Health Center Development in Pike and Muskingum Counties

Community health centers play a vital role in helping Ohioans obtain access to primary and preventive health care services. Sen. Brown announced that the Community Action Committee of Pike County and Muskingum Valley Health Centers, Inc. received new resources from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to support and develop new primary care health services. The funds will help serve an additional 59,806 patients statewide. These new federal resources will help both health centers provide affordable and accessible health care to more children, seniors, and parents in Zanesville and Piketon.



Bolstering Firefighter Safety in Jefferson, Columbiana, Scioto, and Tuscarawas Counties

Our first responders put their lives on the line every day across Ohio.

Sen. Brown announced that the resources for operations and safety by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) program were awarded to the Amsterdam Volunteer Fire Department, the Mingo Junction Fire Department, and the Pleasant Hill Volunteer Fire Department in Jefferson County; the Wellsville Fire Department and the North Georgetown and the Franklin Township Volunteer Fire Departments in Columbiana County; the Rarden Volunteer Fire Department in Scioto County; and the Newcomerstown Fire Department in Tuscarawas County. These funds ensure that firefighters have the resources they need to perform their jobs safely.

Supporting Appalachian Ohio's Agricultural and Rural Economy

Working to Expand Development Opportunities in Ohio's Rural Communities



The Farm Bill is more than a food bill; it's a hunger bill, an energy bill, a conservation bill, and a rural development bill. An amendment authored by Sen. Brown that would expand economic development opportunities for rural communities without any cost to taxpayers was included by the U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee in the 2013 Farm Bill, the *Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act of 2013*.

Sen. Brown worked to include this provision that would overhaul the farm safety net, support rural economic development, and ensure access to healthy and affordable food for all Ohioans. "Rural communities, in particular, rely on the critical resources and programs authorized under this legislation," Sen. Brown said. "Since much of a nation's economic growth potential is driven by the economies of rural and lagging regions, it's critical

that we expand development programs and opportunities to create jobs and build wealth throughout our nation."

Central Ohio Regional Highlights

Creating Jobs and Promoting Economic Development

Fighting to Secure HUBZone Designation in Licking County

Following a four-year effort to bring additional resources to Licking County, Sen. Brown joined Heath Mayor Mark Johns and other local leaders at the Heath-Newark-Licking County Port Authority to highlight the region's renewed designation as a Small Business Administration HUBZone.

To achieve the designation, Sen. Brown passed an amendment to the *National Defense Authorization Act* that would enable the Heath-Newark-Licking County Port Authority to reestablish its designation through 2015. The renewed status gives small businesses in the area or those that employ residents of the area preferential access to federal procurement opportunities in order to encourage economic development and job creation in the region.



Promoting Economic Growth in Greater Columbus

Sen. Brown worked to secure new federal resources for Columbus 2020 to help build upon existing economic development strategies in Delaware, Fairfield, Franklin, Knox, Licking, Logan, Madison, Marion, Morrow, Pickaway, and Union Counties. Sen. Brown worked with leaders at Columbus 2020 to secure a grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) to support the update and maintenance of a comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) for the region. The CEDS project will bring together public and private sectors and create an economic development roadmap to strengthen the region's economy.

Fighting for Main Street

The National Retail Federation and the Ohio Council of Retail Merchants presented Sen. Brown with the "Hero of Main Street Award" at a ceremony in December. The award was presented to Sen. Brown in support and sponsorship of the *Marketplace Fairness Act* which seeks to level the playing field between online and local retailers so that sellers and merchants can compete fairly in the marketplace.

Working with Faith based-Leaders to Create Jobs

Faith-based organizations are indispensable to our nation's social fabric, ensuring a broad range of support services to thousands of individuals and families across Ohio. In February, Sen. Brown and Rep. Joyce Beatty met with African American faith-based leaders during a meeting in Washington, D.C. to outline opportunities for public-private partnerships between faith-based organizations and public entities to collaborate on ways to utilize federal resources to confront challenges facing Ohioans.

“Meetings like these are so important to ensure that community leaders have the resources they need to confront the many challenges facing Ohioans.

Working with Delaware County Leaders on Economic Development

In January, Sen. Brown met with Delaware County leaders to discuss economic development, education, infrastructure investments, and the upcoming session of Congress. The roundtable marked Sen. Brown’s first county roundtable of his second term. In Sen. Brown’s first term, he held more than 200 community roundtable meetings in each of Ohio’s 88 counties.

Working with Honda to Continue Investment in Ohio

Sen. Brown applauded Honda’s \$215 million investment at its Anna Engine Plant and Marysville facilities. Of the \$215 million investment, Honda will allocate \$180 million towards expanding its aluminum die casting and engine parts production at its Anna Engine Plant and Marysville facilities.

“This is great news for Central Ohio and a testament to the skill of its autoworkers,” Sen. Brown said. “It is because of workers like those in Anna and Marysville that one in every six cars produced in the United States is made in Ohio. Our state has a proud manufacturing history, and thanks to investments like Honda’s, for the past four years we have been adding manufacturing jobs for the first time since the 1990s.”



Championing Ohio’s Auto Industry

During a May tour of Cardington Yutaka Technologies (CYT), Sen. Brown met with the plant’s leadership team and toured the facility which employs 650 full-time and 250 temporary employees in Cardington. CYT is an automotive parts supplier for Honda of America Manufacturing.

“It is suppliers like you who make the tools that keep Honda Motors and other companies moving,” Sen. Brown said.

Strengthening Trade Enforcement to Protect Central Ohio Jobs

Opening Markets for Hilliard Pipe Manufacturers

Sen. Brown and Sen. Portman led the fight to ensure that Advanced Drainage Systems (ADS) was not illegally shut out of the Mexican market. Based in Hilliard, ADS is the world’s largest producer of corrugated high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipes used for drainage and sewage systems and employs more than 700 workers. Though ADS has an existing presence in Mexico, until recently the Mexican government had illegally shut out American producers by arbitrarily imposing a technical standard that would bar the use of all HDPE pipes.

Sens. Brown and Portman fought to get ADS a one-year certificate that will allow the company to sell its product in Mexico. Sen. Brown will continue to press the United States Trade

Representative to find a permanent solution that will ensure that export markets in Mexico remain open for ADS and all American manufacturers.

Securing Trade Adjustment Assistance for More than 100 Workers in Columbus

Sen. Brown ensured that more than 100 workers at Ball Metal Beverage Packaging in Columbus were eligible to apply for worker adjustment assistance through the U.S. Department of Labor. Sen. Brown urged the Department of Labor to act swiftly to ensure financial support for these workers and their families.

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program is a federal program that provides aid to workers who lose their jobs or whose work hours and wages are reduced as a result of increased imports. The program extends benefits including training for employment in another job or career, income support, job search allowances, and relocation allowances. Sen. Brown has been a leader in Senate efforts to protect the TAA program, working across the aisle and with the Obama Administration.

Protecting Marion Steel Jobs from Unfair Foreign Trade

Sen. Brown teamed up with a bipartisan group of Senators to urge the International Trade Commission (ITC) to maintain existing anti-dumping orders against unfairly traded imports of steel concrete reinforcing bar more commonly known as “rebar”. Sen. Brown and his colleagues sent a letter to ITC Chairman Irving A. Williamson who was reviewing the anti-dumping orders covering imported rebar from China, Ukraine, Latvia, Belarus, Moldova, Poland, and Indonesia. This issue is critical to protecting American-made rebar— including any produced at Nucor Steel Marion, Inc. — from rebar imports that are illegally undercutting the U.S. market.

Ensuring U.S. Military Buys Steel Made in America – Not in China – for Armor Plates

Mirroring legislation that Sen. Brown introduced to ensure that armor plate for America’s military is truly “Made in America,” the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) restored a 35-year rule requiring that steel purchased by the U.S. military be 100 percent domestically produced. The rule, originally overturned by DoD in 2009, requires armor plate steel to be both melted and finished in the United States. Steel armor plate is used for military vehicles, tanks, and equipment. Under DoD regulations, specialty metals procured for defense purposes—including steel armor plate—must be produced in the United States. Several Ohio companies, including Marion’s Nucor, are involved in the production of armor plate.



Helping Central Ohio Small Businesses Grow and Add Jobs

Helping Communities Recover from Natural Disasters



When natural disasters strike in Ohio, the devastation can affect Ohioans in many different ways. Small businesses, through no fault of their own, can often feel the negative impacts even longer than most individuals or families.

Understanding this, Sen. Brown worked with the U.S. Small Business Association (SBA) to ensure that federal resources were made available to qualifying entrepreneurs in Champaign, Fairfield, Franklin, Licking, Logan, Morrow, Perry, and

Pickaway Counties to offset losses caused by severe storms and winds that occurred between June 29 and July 2, 2012.

Standing with Columbus Workers



In March, Sen. Brown joined Mark Dempsey, owner of Dempsey's Restaurant in Columbus, to call for passage of legislation that would increase the minimum wage for tipped and non-tipped employees. Sen. Brown and Mr. Dempsey highlighted how the *Fair Minimum Wage Act* would offer a raise for millions of Ohio workers.

The *Fair Minimum Wage Act* would raise the federal minimum wage from its current \$7.25 an hour to \$10.10 an hour in three steps of 95 cents and then provide for automatic annual increases linked to changes in the cost of living. It would also

offer the first minimum wage increase for tipped employees in more than 20 years, raising their minimum wage from \$2.13 an hour to 70% of the full minimum wage.

Building Central Ohio Infrastructure and Transportation

Securing Federal Resources for Public Transportation in Columbus

Recognizing the vital role that public transportation plays in the lives of many Central Ohioans, Sen. Brown worked with the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to secure new federal resources to help make energy-efficiency improvements to the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) fleet. As a result of Sen. Brown's efforts, COTA received \$1,023,000 from DOT's Clean Fuels Grant Program.

These resources allowed COTA to secure a compressed natural gas (CNG) monitoring system to better regulate fueling at the McKinley Avenue Operations Facility. The system will transition COTA to rely more heavily on domestically-produced natural gas that will not only help decrease emissions but also improve energy efficiency in their fleet.

Supporting Servicemembers, Veterans and Law Enforcement

Fighting to Secure Veterans' Benefits in Franklin County

During a visit to the Franklin County Veterans Memorial in August, Sen. Brown announced a plan to prevent and reduce the veterans backlog by working to pass two key pieces of legislation, the *Veterans Services Outreach Act* and the *Claims Processing Improvement Act of 2013*.

“The VA must make immediate and necessary changes in order to eliminate its disability claims backlog,” Sen. Brown said. “Central Ohio veterans who selflessly served their country have waited far too long—even years—to receive the compensation they deserve.”

The *Veterans Services Outreach Act* would significantly reduce their wait by providing veterans with the important information and assistance they need to expedite their claims. The *Claims Processing Improvement Act* would give the VA the tools it needs to better attack the backlog so that it can be eliminated.

Acquiring Funding for the Springfield Air National Guard Base

The efforts of Sen. Brown have helped Springfield Air National Guard Base (ANGB) receive \$7.2 million in critical federal resources for the construction of a new intelligence operations facility, which will help secure the long-term viability of the base.

Fighting for Homeless Veterans in Columbus

Sen. Brown fought to secure new federal resources to provide renovated housing for homeless veterans in Columbus as a part of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Grant and Per Diem Program (GPD). The resources will allow the Volunteers of America of Greater Ohio, Inc. to renovate its Columbus facility in an effort to increase the useful life of the facility and address the safety, security, and privacy needs of the homeless veterans served.

According to the VA, the GPD Program helps close gaps in available housing for the nation's most vulnerable homeless veterans. Through Sen. Brown's efforts, Volunteers of America of Greater Ohio, Inc. received \$45,306 to renovate the transitional housing facility at 625 Harmon Avenue in Columbus.

Securing Jobs for Columbus' Returning Heroes

The unemployment rate among recent Iraq and Afghanistan veterans nearly double Ohio's overall unemployment rate. While servicemembers acquire significant training and skills in the military, often these talents are not transferred easily into civilian employment credentials. At an event at American Legion Post 144, Sen. Brown outlined how the *Troop Talent Act of 2013* would help veterans better utilize the skills they acquired in the military to find full-time employment when they transition back to civilian life.

The bill would improve the translation of military skill sets to civilian credentials or licenses by providing earlier and more frequent information to servicemembers during their military careers about earning a civilian credential that matches their specialty training. The bill would also encourage the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) to provide more information to credentialing

organizations about military training and education to better ensure that specific military skills receive appropriate civilian credentials.

It would also prevent credential fraud by establishing strict standards for programs that guarantee a credential after successful completion. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) would also reestablish a committee to ensure efficiency, productivity, and legitimacy in the credentialing process for both servicemembers and taxpayers.

Lastly, the legislation would increase access to high-demand career fields for servicemembers by expanding the current DoD credentialing program. DoD has established a pilot program that attempts to match the skills of servicemembers for various jobs and fields including aircraft mechanics, automotive mechanics, health care professions, supply and logistics personnel, and truck drivers. The bill would expand the program to include information technology (IT), one of the fastest growing fields in the country with a high demand for skilled workers.



Standing Up for Rickenbacker

Ensuring that Rickenbacker Air National Guard Base and Rickenbacker International Airport are well-positioned for continued growth and expansion is a top priority for Sen. Brown. To that end, Sen. Brown carried out several initiatives to support the base this past year.

Working with his Ohio colleagues in the House and Senate, Sen. Brown sent a letter to Secretary of the Air Force Donley and Air Force Chief of Staff General Welsch expressing their strong support for the Ohio National Guard's 121st Air Refueling Wing to be based at Rickenbacker Air Guard Station. Sen. Brown asked for the base to be selected as the primary site for the new KC-46A refueling aircraft. He also personally emphasized his support for this endeavor to the Secretary of Defense.

Additionally, Sen. Brown worked with the Federal Aviation Administration to secure resources for Rickenbacker International Airport that were used to procure equipment to make the runway and infrastructure safe and reliable in all weather conditions.

Protecting and Supporting Central Ohio Consumers

Preventing the Illegal Resale of Stolen Cell Phones

Following an increase in cell phone theft, Sen. Brown worked with concerned citizens and law enforcement to announce support for *The Mobile Device Theft Deterrence Act of 2013*. This legislation would impose criminal penalties of up to five years for those who tamper with a cell phone's International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) numbers to circumvent the database of stolen consumer products established by the four major U.S. carriers in 2012. The bill would also provide



exceptions for legal alterations made to repair and refurbish phones or to protect the privacy and security of the end user.

Police Commander Bob Meader, head of the Columbus Police Department's Property Crimes Bureau, and Donald Leonard, a 71-year-old Columbus resident whose phone was stolen while he was riding a bus, joined Sen. Brown at the meeting.

A stolen iPhone can cost up to \$849.00 to replace. According to the Pew Research Center, as of last year about 87 percent of Americans owned a cell phone, with 45 percent of those Americans owning smart phones that could contain sensitive personal or financial information.

Advocating for Minority Communities

Working with Columbus Advocates to Encourage Immigration Reform

At a Columbus roundtable discussion on immigration reform, Sen. Brown encouraged activists, educators, and representatives from organized labor to continue their advocacy to bring about much-needed change.

"I cannot over-emphasize the power of your voices, your stories and your advocacy," Sen. Brown said. "To fix our broken immigration system, it will take efforts in Congress and energy from Columbus."

The listening session included representatives from the Somali and Latino communities who shared personal stories to illustrate the need for comprehensive immigration reform. Topics included reforms to guest worker programs, border security, and the *Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act (DREAM Act)*.

Supporting Social Security, Medicare and Healthcare

Strengthening Social Security for Ohio's Seniors

Ohioans who have worked hard and played by the rules deserve a health care program that meets their needs and provides a livable retirement. At a National Committee to Preserve Social Security & Medicare town hall in December, Sen. Brown told seniors and activists that our retirement security safety nets can be preserved.

Sen. Brown discussed the *Strengthening Social Security Act of 2013*, which would extend the life of the Social Security Trust Fund to 2049. The legislation would also increase Social Security benefits and increase the annual cost of living adjustment.

Helping Central Ohioans Access Affordable Healthcare

The office of Sen. Brown held an informational session with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to help Ohioans obtain affordable health insurance. The free seminar at Columbus Public Health featured representatives from HHS who answered Central Ohioans' questions about the new health law's insurance options available through the Health Insurance Marketplace.

Protecting Children with Allergies in Central Ohio Schools

At a visit to Columbus Public Health in December, Sen. Brown announced passage of a federal law that would protect American children with severe allergic reactions.

Sen. Brown also applauded the Ohio House of Representatives for passage of Ohio House Bill 296, which would allow schools in the state to maintain a supply of epinephrine without a prescription for any student who may experience life-threatening anaphylactic shock. While Ohio House Bill 296 moves our state in the right direction, more must be done to ensure that all schools have lifesaving medication on hand.

Sen. Brown urged the Ohio Statehouse to take further action by building on Ohio House Bill 296 with additional legislation that will ensure that all Ohio schools maintain emergency epinephrine and will allow Ohio to qualify for priority federal funding signed into law last month.

Fighting for Pediatric Research at Nationwide Children's Hospital



One week before Madison Reed, a Dublin teenager who is living with Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) turned 16, Sen. Brown joined the Reed family to call for increased funding for pediatric medical research. Doctors predicted that Madison, who was diagnosed in infancy with SMA, would not live past the age of two.

Although children make up about 20 percent of the U.S. population, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) dedicates only about five to 10 percent of its annual research budget to pediatrics. At Nationwide Children's Hospital, Sen. Brown announced plans to introduce bipartisan legislation to ensure that NIH investment in pediatric research is more equitable and reflective of the size and breadth of the pediatric patient community. The bill seeks a reasonable proportion of pediatric research grants for rare diseases and conditions like Madison's.

Visiting Transformative Pediatric Care Facilities in Mount Gilead

On a May tour of Flying Horse Farms outside of Mt. Gilead, Sen. Brown discussed the *National Pediatric Research Network Act* and the *Children's Hospitals Education and Research Act of 1998*. Sen. Brown toured the camp, visited its medical center, and met with its employees and leadership team.

Flying Horse Farms provides camp experiences for children with serious illnesses. Located just outside of Mt. Gilead, Ohio, Flying Horse Farms hosts hundreds of children and families each year – free of charge. The camp's 200 wooded acres are home to 22 camp buildings, two lakes, and limitless space for exploration and fun.



Expanding Health Care Access for Central Ohioans

Two community health centers in Franklin County will be able to further develop as a result of new federal resources secured by Sen. Brown. The Columbus Neighborhood Health Center and Lower Light Christian Health Center, Inc. received new resources from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to support and develop new primary care health services. The resources, made possible by the Affordable Care Act, will help serve an additional 59,806 patients statewide.

Allocated by the Health Resources and Services Administration's Health Center program, the grant will provide \$691,667 to the Columbus Neighborhood Health Center and \$216,667 to the Lower Light Christian Health Center.

Strengthening Central Ohio Neighborhoods

Ensuring First Responders Have Necessary Equipment

Sen. Brown worked with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Fire Prevention Program to secure resources for fire departments in Delaware and Marion Counties. The grant program supports projects that enhance the safety of the public and firefighters from fire and related hazards. The main goal is to reach high-risk populations, reduce injury, and prevent death.

Building Safer Fire Departments in Central Ohio Communities

A Delaware County fire department received a federal loan from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to construct a new firehouse because of Sen. Brown's efforts working with the USDA. The Elm Valley Joint Fire District in Ashley received a \$1.7 million loan from USDA's Rural Development branch. According to USDA Rural Development, the loan will be used to construct a new firehouse to replace the two outdated and inadequate buildings. The new firehouse will lower departmental operating costs and enable the Elm Valley Joint Fire Department to provide enhanced service for area residents.



Revealing the Impact of Mortgage Crisis Settlements on Central Ohioans During a January

Preventing the housing crisis from undermining economic recovery efforts in Ohio is of critical importance. In a January press conference, Sen. Brown explained how Ohioans will be affected by the settlement requiring banks to pay \$8.5 billion to homeowners who were hurt by the mortgage crisis. Sen. Brown was joined at Homeport by Central Ohio teacher Jeanne Brigner—a homeowner whose bank initiated foreclosure proceedings despite her being up-to-date on mortgage payments. With the help of Sen. Brown, Ms. Brigner is still in her home. He also outlined legislation that would help the housing market and economic recovery by preventing foreclosures and keeping more Americans in their homes.

Supporting Central Ohio's Agricultural and Rural Economy

Fighting for Rural Economic Development Sen. Brown worked with the U.S. Economic Development Agency (EDA) to gain approval of a \$2,454,800 grant for a new economic development center that will serve Fayette, Pickaway, and Ross Counties. Sen. Brown announced that Ohio Christian University will receive the grant from the EDA to build the Southern Gateway Economic Innovation Development Center, a mixed-use incubator that will focus on agribusiness and technology-based entrepreneurs. The project is expected to create 200 jobs and leverage \$25 million in private investment. These federal resources will lay the groundwork for small businesses throughout South Central Ohio to have a better shot at creating new opportunities and jobs.



Supporting Central Ohio Farmers by Encouraging Residents to Eat Locally-Grown Produce

For each dollar that consumers spend on food, less than \$0.16 goes back to the farmer. Supporting opportunities for farmers to sell their products directly to consumers or through shorter local supply chains means that more of a consumer's dollar stays on the farm, where it is invested in local jobs and supplies to help the local economy.

Sen. Brown joined a Central Ohio farmer and students at Columbus Downtown High School to outline new jobs legislation that would expand markets for Ohio farmers by making the connection between farm and fork easier for Ohio's producers and consumers. Sen. Brown discussed how the *Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act* would support ongoing farm-to-school efforts and increase access to healthy foods. Sen. Brown also visited the culinary arts job training program at the school.

Aimed at helping more farmers sell their products directly to consumers, the legislation would create jobs by assisting farmers engaged in local and regional agriculture by addressing production, aggregation, processing, marketing, and distribution needs. It would also ensure that consumers – particularly low-income families and seniors – have better access to nutritious, locally-grown food.



Improving Airport Access in Central Ohio's Rural Counties

To ensure that rural areas are not shut out of Ohio's intermodal development, Sen. Brown worked with the Federal Aviation Administration to secure resources to improve airports in Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Knox, Logan, Madison, Marion, Pickaway, and Ross Counties. These resources were used to enhance capacity and safety through rehabilitating runways, constructing access roads, procuring equipment related to weather reporting and visual guidance, acquiring land for future airport development, and installing and repairing perimeter fencing. The projects undertaken by the county airports will help them move towards being self-sustaining and revenue generating.

Northeast Ohio Regional Highlights

Creating Jobs and Promoting Economic Development

Opening a New Small Business & Creating Jobs in Cleveland

The nation's largest urban food production greenhouse opened in February, bringing new life to an abandoned and vacant area in Cleveland.

Thanks to more than \$10 million from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Green Growers Cooperative brought 40 new jobs to the area. The project is the latest initiative of the Evergreen Cooperative.

Sen. Brown applauded the opening saying, "The Evergreen Cooperative initiative is a model for how we can create green jobs in communities all across Ohio and the country. These for-profit, environmentally-responsible businesses are helping put vacant land to good use in Downtown Cleveland. The Green City Growers will also help bring fresh produce to an urban neighborhood that might not have access otherwise. Most importantly, the Evergreen Cooperatives are putting Ohioans back to work in good-paying jobs—and over time, those employees even have a stake in the company. It's a truly revolutionary way of doing business that promotes local economic development."

Convening Job Creators to Promote Economic Development in Shaker Heights



We must continue to make Northeast Ohio attractive to entrepreneurs to strengthen its place as a hub for business innovation and job creation. Sen. Brown visited LaunchHouse, a Greater Cleveland business accelerator, to tour its facilities and hold a roundtable with local entrepreneurs. Attendees discussed LaunchHouse's success and its new efforts to attract entrepreneurs and create jobs in Northeast Ohio. During his visit, Sen. Brown and LaunchHouse also announced "Entrepreneurship Week," an initiative aimed at bringing entrepreneurs and investors to the Cleveland area.

Hosting an Energy Efficiency Workshop in Northeast Ohio

Sen. Brown partnered with the Council of Development Finance Agencies and the Toledo Port Authority in June to host an energy efficiency workshop. The workshop explored the importance of energy efficiency retrofits and installations and the variety of financing programs in the Buckeye State available to support these developments. Attendees included local officials, economic development professionals, small businesses, higher education professionals, and energy experts.

Participants learned about innovative financing tools to help manufacturers, small businesses, local governments, and non-profits reduce their energy costs by making energy efficient

upgrades. Sen. Brown has long championed energy efficiency improvement programs. In 2010, Sen. Brown announced that Ohio received \$32 million in *Recovery Act* resources for energy efficient retrofitting in Cincinnati and Toledo. The federal resources were allocated by the U.S. Department of Energy's "Retrofit Ramp Up Program," as part of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program.

Standing with Northeast Ohio Businesses in Pursuit of a Fair Minimum Wage

Northeast Ohio citizens work hard, play by the rules, and should be able to take care of their families. But too many Ohioans are working harder than ever and barely getting by. Ensuring a fair wage is good for middle class families and good for our economy.



Northeast Ohio business owners from Brothers Printing and Synergistic Systems joined Sen. Brown at two Cleveland visits in March calling for passage of the *Fair Minimum Wage Act*—legislation that would raise the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour in three steps and provide the first minimum wage increase to tipped employees in more than 20 years.

Supporting Fuel Cell Technology in Northeast Ohio

Sen. Brown authored the *21st Century Investment Act of 2012* which would help to expand the research and development tax credit, raise the credit from 20 percent to 25 percent for research performed in the U.S., and increase for 10 years the domestic manufacturing tax credit from 9 to 15 percent.

The Ohio Fuel Cell Coalition presented Sen. Brown with the Pathfinder Award at Lorain County Community College in March to thank him for his support of fuel cell commercialization. The Pathfinder Award is given annually by the Fuel Cell and Hydrogen Energy Association and recognizes the contributions of individuals to the commercialization of fuel cells and hydrogen in the United States.

Working with Northern Ohioans on Immigration Reform

At an April roundtable discussion on immigration reform, Sen. Brown heard from activists, attorneys, and business leaders about how immigration reform can spur economic development. Hosted by Global Cleveland, the session focused on family-based visas, immigrant visas for STEM graduates, and high-skilled and low-skilled visas.

Participants called for the creation of a high-skill immigration zone for economically stressed areas, an improved temporary visa system, permanent visas for STEM graduates, an improved family-based visa system, and the need to create a pathway to citizenship for unauthorized immigrants.



Sen. Brown discussed his H-1B visa bill that would provide additional oversight of the H-1B visa program by requiring all employers to make a good faith effort to hire an American worker,

advertise the opening for at least 30 days before applying for an H-1B visa, and offer all H-1B workers the prevailing wage.

Promoting Middle Class Growth in Euclid

In an April visit to Babcock & Wilcox's Nuclear Operation facility in Euclid, Sen. Brown thanked workers and management for keeping Ohio's economic engine running and fueling middle class growth.

"It's good to see Ohioans doing what we do best – making products that keep America moving forward," Sen. Brown said.

The company is the lead contractor for the Navy's nuclear fleet. The advanced manufacturing operations facility in Euclid produces high-tech electro-mechanical equipment to the U.S. government and employs 280 workers.

Working to Retain 1,000 Ashtabula Jobs

Sen. Brown joined the Ashtabula County Port Authority and elected officials in September to celebrate the groundbreaking of the \$3.1 million redevelopment project at the former First Energy C Plant, known as "Plant C." The facility serves the critical water needs of Ashtabula's industrial community and helps sustain more than 1,000 jobs.



Sen. Brown helped secure a \$1.55 million U.S. Economic Development Agency (EDA) grant, matched with a \$1.55 million Ohio Water Development Authority (OWDA) loan that will upgrade the outdated piping and pumping system in order to spur economic growth and create and protect jobs in Ashtabula County.

"The redevelopment of Plant C is significant to the health of Ashtabula County's economy," Sen. Brown said. "Updating the plant's aging infrastructure will protect more than 1,000 jobs and help the businesses that rely on its water. These resources will also go a long way in ensuring that Ashtabula County is able to develop and create jobs in the future."

In 2010, Sen. Brown convened a meeting with the Ashtabula County Port Authority, local business leaders, elected officials, and other stakeholders to explore strategies to ensure the future viability of Plant C. In 2011, Sen. Brown fought to reauthorize EDA funding and introduced an amendment to strengthen EDA's ability to revitalize former auto communities in hard-hit regions of Ohio and the country.

Providing Resources for Jobs in Lorain

Thanks to \$1 million from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), nearly 200 jobs will be created in Lorain County. In September, the EDA approved the grant for Lorain County Community College (LCCC). Sen. Brown worked with EDA and LCCC throughout the highly competitive process. The new resources are expected to leverage more than \$13 million in private investment to create a new manufacturing pilot production lab for microsystems.

Strengthening Trade Enforcement to Protect Northeast Ohio Jobs

Fighting for Manufacturing Jobs at Meggitt Aircraft Braking Systems



Sen. Brown joined Akron Mayor Don Plusquellic in March to celebrate the retention of nearly 200 Akron manufacturing jobs as a result of investments made at the local Meggitt Aircraft Braking Systems facility. Since 2008, Sen. Brown has worked alongside Meggitt workers and company management to retain local manufacturing jobs.

“Meggitt’s new investment is proof that you succeed when you bet on the American worker,” said Sen. Brown. “This facility shows Ohio’s ability to make things and I look forward to Meggitt’s future growth in Northeast Ohio and the jobs that come with it.”

In 2008, the future of Meggitt’s manufacturing facility in Akron was unclear when the company announced that it was moving manufacturing jobs to Mexico. Sen. Brown played a critical role in saving nearly 200 defense-related manufacturing jobs at Meggitt, working with the company and the United Auto Workers (UAW) to encourage Meggitt to reverse its decision.

In 2010, Sen. Brown visited Meggitt workers to mark the signing of a new 3-year agreement with the UAW that helped save hundreds of jobs at the plant.

Over the past year, Meggitt has minimized the number of layoffs that it originally announced, invested more than \$4.2 million in revitalizing its facility’s manufacturing process, and has called back several workers to its production line.

Protecting Ohio Manufacturing by Holding China Accountable

In May, Sen. Brown visited U. S. Steel’s Lorain Tubular Operations where he was joined by U. S. Steel Chairman and Chief Executive Officer John P. Surma on a tour of the #6 Quench and Temper finishing line. The line represents a \$100 million investment by U. S. Steel into Lorain Tubular Operations. Sen. Brown’s efforts were vital in ensuring U. S. Steel was provided necessary relief from Chinese steel pipe imports and could maintain its facility in Lorain and expand its operations.



On the tour, Sen. Brown met many of U. S. Steel’s employees and discussed their work in the expansion. The \$100 million investment by U. S. Steel is meant to better serve the company’s oil and natural gas customers, particularly those in shale resource development. Lorain Tubular Operations employs more than 700 Ohioans and its products contribute to U. S. Steel’s standing as North America’s largest integrated tubular products manufacturer.

Sen. Brown has long championed U. S. Steel and fought to ensure it can compete fairly against the Chinese and in the international trade market. Sen. Brown also wrote to the Department of

Commerce (DOC) in May urging the extension of duties on Chinese steel imports that have helped U. S. Steel. His effort came in advance of an expected DOC ruling on a petition regarding product coverage for duties ordered on Oil Country Tubular Goods (OCTG) from China. OCTG are used for domestic oil exploration, particularly in the shale industry, and are produced in Ohio by companies including U. S. Steel in Lorain, V&M STAR in Youngstown, Wheatland Tube in Warren, and JMC Steel in Brookfield.

Working to Save Local Jobs in Bedford

After Ben Venue, a German based drug production company with a facility in Bedford, announced that it would stop production by the end of 2013, Sen. Brown sat down with Bedford City officials, management from Ben Venue Laboratories Inc., and U.S. Rep. Marcia Fudge in an effort to work with the company to find a buyer to save local jobs. The planned action, which includes a slow phasing out through 2014, could cost Ohio more than 1,100 jobs.



During the meeting, Ben Venue agreed to work in close coordination with Bedford in order to help find a buyer for its facility and has agreed to weekly meetings with local officials. For more than 80 years, Ben Venue and Bedford have been partners in creating jobs and promoting economic growth in the region. Sen. Brown left the meeting encouraged by the company's willingness to work with the city in order to find it a new buyer for the facility.

Fighting for Manufacturing Jobs in Ashland

During a December visit to Pentair, Inc. in Ashland, Sen. Brown discussed the importance of American manufacturing and legislation that would position the United States as a global leader in the field.

The bipartisan *Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act of 2013* would bring together private industry, universities, federal agencies and others from across the country to strengthen the kind of research and development efforts that lead to better technology and more commercial applications.



More than 140 years old, Pentair is one of the oldest remaining Ashland manufacturing companies, employing more than 350 workers (125 hourly).

Pentair suffered during the downturn in the economy but things are looking up. It has recently hired 10-15 hourly workers and plans to hire more and add new equipment to its Ashland plant.

Bringing Manufacturing Jobs Back to Northeast Ohio

New federal resources will be used to provide assistance to as many as 25 firms that have the potential to bring manufacturing jobs back to Northeast Ohio.

The \$1.7 million “Make It in America” grant, announced by Sen. Brown in October, is one of 10 awarded nationwide. The Manufacturing Advocacy and Growth Network (MAGNET), the Medina County Workforce Development, Team Northeast Ohio (Team NEO), and WIRE-Net joined forces to make the project possible.

The \$1,796,867 grant will assist up to 25 organizations in areas such as commercialization of new products or services, workforce development and/or training, and assessment of critical manufacturing needs and capabilities within targeted sector supply chains.

Advocating for Cleveland Workers

Sen. Brown has been a lifelong supporter of American workers’ right to collectively bargain. During a July conference in downtown Cleveland, Sen. Brown received the Eugene V. Debs Award from the Midwest Labor Press Association.

The award is presented every year to an individual for excellence and dedication to the ideals of the union movement. The Midwest Labor Press Association has more than 180 members representing 75 labor publications in nine states.

Helping Small Businesses Grow and Add Jobs

Partnering with Google to Help Cleveland Small Businesses

In May, Sen. Brown teamed up with web giant Google to hold a small business workshop in Cleveland focused on ensuring that Ohio businesses are maximizing their online opportunities.



At the *Ohio Get Your Business Online* event, Google experts helped small business owners create their own websites courtesy of Intuit and committed to help train the business owners on how to reach more customers online. Businesses also received a customized domain name, free web hosting for one year, a local business listing on Google Maps, and free tools, training, and other resources. While 97 percent of internet users look online for local products and services, 54 percent of Ohio small

businesses do not have a website or online presence.

Building Northeast Ohio Infrastructure and Transportation

Working with Elyria Business Leaders on Highway Safety

Sen. Brown got a first-hand look at products manufactured by Elyria-based Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems during a March visit to the company’s national headquarters.

Bendix, which employs 500 people at its Elyria facility, develops safety technologies, air brake charging, and control systems and components for medium and heavy-duty trucks, tractors, trailers, buses, and other commercial vehicles throughout North America.

Sen. Brown met with top management team members and discussed National Highway Traffic Safety Administration safety improvements. Bendix was supportive of Sen. Brown's *Motorcoach Enhanced Safety Act*.

Supporting Servicemembers, Veterans, and Law Enforcement

Seeking an End to Veteran Homelessness in Cuyahoga County



While visiting the Liberty at St. Clair located on Cleveland's east side, Sen. Brown stressed the importance of increased resources to tackle the problem of chronic veteran homelessness. The *Homeless Veterans Prevention Act*, designed to end veteran homelessness by 2015, would improve and expand existing programs offered by local service organizations and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

In June, Sen. Brown announced new resources for critical support services for homeless veterans in Cuyahoga County. The Cuyahoga County Volunteers of America of Greater Ohio, Inc. in Brecksville, received a \$300,000 grant from U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP). The resources are being used to provide job training and support for homeless veterans.

In July, Sen. Brown also announced new resources to help homeless and low-income veterans in Cleveland. Mental Health Services for Homeless Persons, Inc. received a \$1,676,714 grant that is being used to provide supportive services to low-income veteran families living in or transitioning to permanent housing. Mental Health Services for Homeless Persons, Inc. plans to serve approximately 400 participant households in Cuyahoga County.

Supporting Ravenna Joint Military Training Center

Sen. Brown understands the importance that Ohio's military epicenters hold in protecting the state and the nation's security. He worked to secure \$5.2 million in resources for the Camp Ravenna Joint Military Training Center, with funding going towards extending the Ravenna water and sewer line. This infrastructure and utility funding is crucial to the growth of Camp Ravenna, which the Ohio National Guard plans to expand and develop as a major training site.

Ensuring the U.S. Government Purchase Flags Made in America

American flags should be American-made. It is the right way to honor our veterans and it is the right way to support American workers and businesses. With Ohio companies proudly producing the American flag, taxpayer funds should not be used to purchase those made in other countries. The *All-American Flag Act of 2013* would ensure that the government buys flags that are entirely produced with American-made materials. In honor of Flag Day, Sen. Brown joined veterans on board the USS COD in Cleveland to announce the reintroduction of the *All-American Flag Act*, legislation that would ensure that flags purchased by the federal government are entirely made in America.

Calling on the VA to Reduce its Backlog

The Veterans Administration (VA) must make immediate and necessary changes in order to eliminate its disability claims backlog. It is unacceptable that Northeast Ohio veterans who selflessly serve their country have to wait far too long to receive the compensation they deserve. A senior member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, Sen. Brown called on the VA in August to make immediate and necessary changes to eliminate its backlog of more than 523,000 claims filed by disabled veterans and their caregivers.



During roundtables with officials of the Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission in Cleveland and the Mahoning County Veterans Service Commission in Youngstown, Sen. Brown announced a plan to prevent and reduce the backlog by working to pass two key pieces of legislation: the *Veterans Services Outreach Act* and the *Claims Processing Improvement Act of 2013*.

The *Veterans Services Outreach Act* would significantly reduce their wait by providing veterans the important information and assistance they need to improve their claims. The *Claims Processing Improvement Act* would give the VA the tools it needs to better attack the backlog so that it can be eliminated.

Helping Northeast Ohio Veterans Find Employment when they Return Home

In October, Sen. Brown traveled to Cleveland and Youngstown to build support for the *Troop Talent Act of 2013*, legislation that would help veterans better use the skills they acquired in the military to find full-time employment when they transition back to civilian life.



The unemployment rate among recent Iraq and Afghanistan veterans is nearly double Ohio's overall unemployment rate. A senior member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, Sen. Brown said the bill would reduce unemployment among recently-returned servicemembers and ease their transition into the civilian workforce.

The *Troop Talent Act of 2013* would ensure a clearer and easier path to matching military skills with civilian accreditation.

Protecting Northeast Ohio Consumers and the Middle Class

Defending Northeast Ohio Consumers from Unfair Overdraft Fees

Banks should play by the rules instead of purposefully “re-ordering” their customers’ debit card transactions so that they profit while consumers rack up costly penalties. As chair of the Senate Banking Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection, Sen. Brown alerted



Ohioans to predatory “overdraft” practices by banks that lead customers to overdraw their checking accounts, causing them to be charged exorbitant penalties.

At a visit to Cleveland Saves, a program dedicated to helping Northeast Ohioans build their savings, Sen. Brown announced new legislation that would protect Ohioans from these practices.

Sen. Brown’s bill would put a stop to this by empowering the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) to crack down on banks that employ predatory practices. It also would allow the CFPB to establish fair guidelines to protect consumers and the banks and credit unions that play fair with their customers.

Alerting Ohioans to the Rise of Tax Identity Fraud

With the increase in tax identity fraud rising throughout the country, Sen. Brown announced his cosponsorship of the *Identity Theft and Tax Fraud Prevention Act*. The legislation would crack down on fraudulently filed tax returns and speed up the delivery of long-awaited returns to Ohioans whose identities have been compromised. The bill would also require the IRS to strengthen identity theft prevention programs. It is estimated that 67,000 Ohioans could have been affected by cases of tax fraud in 2012. Thomas McIntosh, a Maple Heights resident and victim of tax fraud, joined Sen. Brown for the announcement.

Protecting Northeast Ohioans from Cell Phone Theft

At a May visit to Euclid City Hall, Sen. Brown outlined legislation to deter theft by preventing the illegal resale of stolen phones. The *Mobile Device Theft Deterrence Act of 2013* would impose criminal penalties of up to five years for criminals who tamper with cell phones’ International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) numbers.

Sen. Brown was joined by Euclid City Chief of Police Tom Brickman, Public Information Officer Sgt. Mitch Houser, as well as Dennis Kashi, a Northeast Ohio resident whose phone was stolen and has spent years working in the cell phone industry with numerous victims of cell phone theft.

Supporting Social Security, Medicare, and Healthcare

Fighting for More Resources for Pediatric Research



Though children make up 20 percent of the U.S. population, less than 10 percent of federal research dollars go toward research on pediatric conditions. Alongside a Northeast Ohio family whose son is living with cystic fibrosis (CF), Sen. Brown visited Cleveland’s Rainbow Babies and Children’s Hospital to unveil new legislation in February aimed at increasing resources for pediatric medical research.

Sen. Brown was joined by 6-year-old Porter Chatterton, who was diagnosed with CF as a baby, during his visit.

Pediatric research institutions and pediatric researchers face real financial challenges that threaten their important work. That's why Sen. Brown will re-introduce the *National Pediatric Research Network Act*, to improve investments into pediatric research.

Sen. Brown announced plans to introduce bipartisan legislation to ensure that the National Institutes of Health investment in pediatric research is more equitable and reflective of the size and breadth of the pediatric patient community. The bill seeks a reasonable proportion of pediatric research grants for rare diseases or conditions.

Bolstering the Fight Against Breast Cancer

In honor of Mother's Day and Women's Health Week in May, Sen. Brown announced two new bills that would help accelerate the end of breast cancer by 2020 and educate breast cancer patients about their reconstructive options prior to surgery.

At University Hospitals (UH) Seidman Cancer Center in Cleveland, Sen. Brown joined Dr. Lyndsay Harris, Director of the UH Breast Cancer Program, and a Cleveland breast cancer patient scheduled for reconstructive surgery later that month.



An overwhelming majority of women are not informed of their breast cancer reconstructive options, even though, by law, any insurance plan that covers breast cancer treatment must also cover reconstruction or prosthetic care. The *Breast Cancer Patient Education Act* would ensure all women are informed of their care options prior to breast cancer surgery, so that they can benefit from a systematic plan of care from the start of treatment.

Sen. Brown also outlined the *Accelerating the End of Breast Cancer Act*, a bill that would establish a commission to develop a strategic plan to end breast cancer and capitalize on the overlooked and underfunded initiatives that hold the most promise for eradicating breast cancer.

Protecting Northeast Ohio Seniors

Seniors have spent a lifetime paying into Social Security, but as the cost of living continues to rise, the budgets of many are stretched to the breaking point. Sen. Brown visited the Senior Independence Senior Center of Mahoning County in Youngstown to announce his support for a November bill that would increase benefits for seniors and extend the solvency of the Social Security Trust Fund that nearly two in three Americans rely on for at least half of their income in old age.



The *Strengthening Social Security Act of 2013* would ensure that seniors receive the benefits they earned. The bill would expand benefits, strengthen the program's future, and make retirement more secure for all Americans.

Helping the Northeast Ohio Uninsured

Sen. Brown, working with MetroHealth and Ohio government officials, designated MetroHealth System as a demonstration site under the new health law, helping as many as 30,000 uninsured Ohioans gain access to health care.

The designation, which Sen. Brown urged the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to approve, is the first in Ohio. It was made possible by the *Affordable Care Act*. The designation is helping MetroHealth improve access to appropriate health care, reduce costly emergency room visits, and reduce costs to taxpayers and businesses in Ohio.

Strengthening Northeast Ohio Neighborhoods

Rebuilding Ohio's neighborhoods



Responding to the need for flexibility in addressing the aftermath of the housing crisis, Sen. Brown wrote a letter supporting the Ohio Housing Finance Agency's (OHFA) proposal to use a portion of its Hardest Hit Funds—federally designated funds to aid struggling communities heavily affected by the financial crisis—for the purpose of removing vacant and blighted property from Ohio's neighborhoods. Sen. Brown believed that OHFA struck the right balance of portioning an amount for demolition while preserving the bulk of its resources to help Ohioans stay in their homes through housing counseling programs.

Discussing the \$8.5 billion Mortgage Settlement with Housing Advocates

The Justice Department reached a settlement with the country's largest banks for financial restitution for abusive banking practices that led to the housing crisis and financial meltdown. Under the terms of the settlement, the banks would review their files, locate victims, and distribute cash payments for creating a financial hardship. Sen. Brown wrote to the U.S. Department of Justice and federal banking regulators in January urging them to prevent financial companies from taking tax deductions as part of these agreements. Sen. Brown discussed the settlement at Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc. (ABLE) in Toledo.

"While the settlement reached can in no way make up for reckless actions taken by mortgage servicers that harmed families and our economic recovery, it is one step forward," Brown said. "But it's simply unacceptable that these Wall Street banks can write off these mortgage settlements, shifting the cost to taxpayers. Banks that take a family's home because of errors or fraud should not get a tax deduction and a slap on the wrist. Breaking the law should not be a business expense."

Working with Local Communities to Redevelop Vacant and Blighted Properties

After an agreement with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Cuyahoga County Land Bank expired, Sen. Brown worked with both organizations to extend the contract to the end of the fiscal year. Under the new deal, the Cuyahoga County Land Bank will continue to purchase low value properties that can be either redeveloped or demolished for future development. The new deal improves Cleveland communities while protecting the interest of taxpayers.

Looking out for Strongsville Students

Sen. Brown joined Strongsville teachers at a strike rally in April, calling on both sides of the dispute to find common ground at the bargaining table.

“I believe the school board and the members of the teachers union both care about the children,” Sen. Brown said. “Strongsville students deserve a settlement now. But a settlement can’t be reached if the two parties aren’t talking. That’s why I joined teachers today who told me how they want to be back in the classroom and why I will keep in contact with the School Board,” he said. “This issue is about fairness for educators and taxpayers alike. But most importantly, this is about our children’s wellbeing and their right to a quality education, which is why both sides need to come together now.”

The contentious eight-week strike by the 383 members of the Strongsville Education Association ended on April 28.

Fighting on Behalf of Northeast Ohio Homeowners



At the 23rd Annual Fair Lending Conference in June, Sen. Brown addressed the need to correct problems in the housing market to protect homeowners and taxpayers.

“Forty-five years after the federal *Fair Housing Act*, we still have work to do to make housing more affordable and available for all,” he said.

Sen. Brown discussed the *HOME Act* to protect LGBT Ohioans from housing discrimination as well as his bipartisan *Terminating Bailouts for Taxpayer Fairness Act of 2013* that would prevent any one financial institution from becoming so large that it could put our economy on the brink of collapse.

Training Cuyahoga County Students for the Future

At risk-youth will get the training they need to succeed thanks to \$1,100,000 in new resources from the U.S. Department of Labor. In June, Sen. Brown announced news of the award to the Guidestone YouthBuild Program in Cuyahoga County. The program will provide educational and occupational training for Berea youth between the ages of 16-24.

The program helps individuals earn a GED or high school diploma and provides occupational training. The program also teaches participants skills in both construction and fast-growing areas such as health care and information technology.

Helping Cuyahoga County Communities Recover after Hurricane Sandy

Federal resources are helping communities recover from storm damage and flooding caused in 2012 by Hurricane Sandy. Sen. Brown announced in June that the Ohio Department of Natural Resources will receive \$3,482,283.75 for supplies and labor to repair the piers and docks, water lines, and electrical damage at Cleveland's Edgewater Marina.

The Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works will also receive \$1,297,007.87 to repair multiple docks at Whiskey Island Marina.

Northwest Ohio Regional Highlights

Creating Jobs and Promoting Economic Development

Celebrating Ohio's Manufacturing and Skilled Workforce in Sandusky

Manufacturing jobs remain key drivers of Ohio's economy, and the construction of Cedar Fair's record-breaking wing roller coaster at Cedar Point, the GateKeeper, is a reflection of the tremendous feats the state's skilled workforce can accomplish.



In March, Sen. Brown visited the GateKeeper construction site at Cedar Point in Sandusky to recognize project leaders and local workers instrumental in building the \$30 million project. Cedar Fair relied on many Ohio manufacturers to build the GateKeeper, including Clermont Steel Fabricators of Batavia which made the coaster's steel track and supports, and skilled workers from a variety of trade unions.

Promoting Northwest Ohio's Auto Industry

The auto industry is vital to communities in every corner of Ohio, but especially to those in Northwest Ohio. In May, Sen. Brown visited the General Motors (GM) Powertrain plant in Toledo where GM has invested millions of dollars to increase capacity and develop its all-new advanced 8-speed automatic transmission to be used in numerous GM vehicles by 2016. The plant employs almost 2,000 people and has been completely rebuilt in the past five years.

Sen. Brown visited with workers, walked the plant floor, and toured the new rooftop solar array that features panels made by First Solar in Perrysburg. The investment and growth evident at GM and Chrysler plants in Northwest Ohio is a testament to the dedication of the companies' workers and the success of the auto rescue.

Celebrating Northwest Ohio's Rich History and Tourism

Ohio's vibrant tourism industry stems in large part from the state's important role in United States' history. As the site of the renowned Battle of Lake Erie in the War of 1812, Put-in-Bay hosted thousands of visitors and a number of special events in 2013 honoring the battle's bicentennial and the accomplishments of Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry, who led his sailors to victory.

At a Put-in-Bay ceremony in April, the U.S. Mint unveiled a "Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial" quarter which honors the battle, Commodore Perry, and the lasting peace between the United States, Canada, and Britain. Sen. Brown marked the occasion with a certificate of commendation from his office presented to Memorial officials at the ceremony.

At a September National Park Service ceremony at Put-in-Bay, Sen. Brown paid tribute to the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Lake Erie with his office's presentation of a bipartisan resolution passed in July by the Senate, commemorating the occasion and the bravery of those soldiers who helped procure American freedom. Sen. Brown was a cosponsor of the measure.

Promoting Northwest Ohio Manufacturing Plants and Workers



Sen. Brown finds opportunities to visit and support manufacturing plants and workers in Northwest Ohio whenever possible. His visits this year included stops at the Heinz factory in Fremont, the largest ketchup factory in the world, and Campbell's Soup in Napoleon, whose products are sold throughout the world. In both visits, Sen. Brown toured the production lines and visited with employees to learn more about innovations they are working on and the challenges they face.

Strengthening Trade Enforcement to Protect Northwest Ohio Jobs

Defending American Manufacturing of Appliances in Clyde

Ohio companies can compete with anyone in the world, but unfairly-subsidized imports from foreign countries harm our ability to innovate and compete. Whirlpool Corporation, which has five of its nine U.S. manufacturing plants in Ohio (including a washing machine production facility in Clyde), had charged that South Korea and Mexico were unfairly dumping large residential clothes washers in the U.S. market, harming Whirlpool's competitiveness.

In January, the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) voted to impose duties on clothes washers from South Korea and Mexico, a decision Sen. Brown had urged the Commission to make during testimony before the ITC a month earlier. Sen. Brown applauded the decision, which will improve the competitiveness of Whirlpool and other manufacturers around the country.

Urging India-Based Company to Protect Workers and Jobs at Findlay's Cooper Tire

In July, India-based Apollo Tyre announced plans to merge with Findlay's Cooper Tire & Rubber Co., potentially making Apollo the seventh largest company in the world. After the announcement, Sen. Brown urged senior management leaders to protect Ohio workers and jobs and remain committed to the Findlay community, where Cooper Tire has been for a century.

Fighting for Northwest Ohio Workers

We know how to make things in Ohio, but in an ever-changing economy, Ohio workers sometimes find their jobs at risk when companies decide to close down or move elsewhere. Sen. Brown works hard to help quality Ohio workers keep their jobs and to encourage companies doing business in Ohio to thrive.

In May, Sen. Brown pushed Chassix, Inc. to reconsider its decision to close its auto parts machining plant in Edon and instead bring new investments to the facility. In September, Sen. Brown urged Janesville Acoustics to preserve nearly 300 local jobs at its Norwalk manufacturing plant and offered whatever assistance he could provide to save the plant. While these efforts are not always successful, Ohio workers can be confident that Sen. Brown is committed to doing all that he can on their behalf.

Helping Small Businesses Grow and Add Jobs

Helping Businesses and Municipalities Achieve Energy Efficiency Energy efficiency improvements can help save anywhere from hundreds to hundreds of thousands of dollars, but the upfront investment costs can make such improvements difficult for businesses or municipalities to consider. A project launched by the Lucas County Port Authority and financed with \$15 million in seed funding from the U.S. Department of Energy is helping provide the tools needed for Northwest Ohio businesses, non-profits, economic development agencies, and municipalities to retrofit their businesses in ways that save energy and provide significant economic savings.

In June, Sen. Brown's office partnered with the Council of Development Finance Agencies and the Lucas County Port Authority's BetterBuildings Northwest Ohio program to host an energy efficiency and building retrofit financing workshop at the University of Toledo. The free program helped Northwest Ohio small businesses and municipalities learn about some of the financing tools available to help them save both money and energy.



Meeting with Local Leaders in Sandusky and Erie Counties

Open conversations with local leaders are an opportunity for Sen. Brown to bring commonsense, Ohio-grown ideas to Washington. Sen. Brown met with Sandusky County leaders in January and Erie County leaders in March for roundtable discussions on economic development, education, and infrastructure investments. These roundtables are part of a series of listening sessions that Sen. Brown will convene across Ohio during his second term in the Senate. In Sen. Brown's first term, he held more than 200 community roundtable meetings, including at least one session in each of Ohio's 88 counties.

On issue after issue, roundtables like this have helped Sen. Brown craft legislation with real results for hardworking Ohio families. For example, the idea for the *Strengthening Employment Clusters to Organize Regional Success* (SECTORS) Act, a bipartisan jobs bill to train workers for high-growth jobs, was sparked at a roundtable on innovation.

Promoting Economic Development Through the Arts in Toledo

Toledo is home to an estimated 600 arts-related businesses that employ over 3,100 people. These organizations provide learning and cultural experiences as well as economic development opportunities through job creation, investments, and visitors.

In December, Sen. Brown met with Brian Kennedy, Director of the Toledo Museum of Art, and members of the Toledo Arts Commission, the longest standing arts commission in Ohio. During the meeting, Sen. Brown discussed how funding support from the National Endowment for the Arts and *Recovery Act* has allowed the Arts Commission to partner with other local organizations, including the City of Toledo, to create a Strategic Plan for Arts and Culture for Toledo to support cultural vibrancy and economic revitalization.

Building Northwest Ohio Infrastructure and Transportation

Connecting Northwest Ohio Businesses and Communities with Critical Resources

Ohio's aging water infrastructure includes harbors in need of dredging, flood mitigation projects, and more than 900 potentially hazardous dams. In May, the Senate passed the *Water Resources Development Act* (WRDA) to connect businesses and communities throughout Ohio with critical resources for maintenance, inspections, and upgrades to water infrastructure projects.

The WRDA also includes three bipartisan amendments introduced by Sen. Brown that would help slow the spread of Asian carp in the Ohio and Mississippi River Basin, expedite projects like the Blanchard River Flood Risk Management Project (BRFRMP), and utilize American-made steel and iron in water infrastructure projects. As we work to build safer communities and encourage businesses to grow and invest in Ohio, the bipartisan WRDA is an important step toward continued economic development.

Celebrating Oregon City Schools Investing in Energy-Efficient Infrastructure

Oregon City School District administrators, teachers, parents, and students are working to improve our environment and ensure that Ohio schools take steps to protect it for current and future generations. In May, Sen. Brown met with 160 Oregon City School District students and teachers and Tom Susor, City of Oregon Council President, during a school visit to Washington, D.C.

The school district recently partnered with the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority to transition away from traditional electricity to wind and solar power. Sen. Brown honored the school district, located in Lucas County, by inserting a statement about the district's environmental work into the official Congressional Record. Ohio schools that work to reduce environment-related health issues are doing their part to provide students with an environment where learning is the primary focus

Investing in the Toledo and Sandusky Harbors

The Toledo and Sandusky Harbors are critical to commercial and recreational life in Northwest Ohio. With the port and river supporting thousands of jobs, we cannot afford further delays to harbor maintenance that could slow commerce, stifle economic growth, and cost jobs.

Sen. Brown was a lead sponsor of bipartisan legislation introduced in February that would ensure increased funding for maintenance and operations of federal ports—including Sandusky and Toledo's. The Toledo Harbor supports more than 2,640 jobs and generates an estimated \$121 million annually, while the Sandusky Harbor supports more than 410 jobs, with an estimated \$88 million generated annually. The *Harbor Maintenance Act* would ensure adequate resources to maintain and dredge Ohio's 15 harbors each year so that shipping and other port-related activities can continue without interruption.



Pressuring U.S. Army Corps to Fund Blanchard River Flood Risk Management Project

The Blanchard River has repeatedly spilled over its banks, causing severe flooding in the City of Findlay and the Village of Ottawa. In 2007, the area suffered its most damaging flood event in nearly 100 years, forcing hundreds of residents to evacuate and halting operations for area businesses. Since then, the Ottawa and Findlay communities have invested time and valuable financial resources into getting the Blanchard River Flood Risk Management Project (BRFRMP) underway.

In July, Sen. Brown joined Sen. Portman and Rep. Latta to successfully press the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to reprogram funds for Fiscal Year 2013 in order for the BRFRMP to receive the necessary resources for its completion. Sen. Brown and his colleagues continue to put pressure on the USACE to complete the study phase of the project as soon as possible and inform the Ottawa and Findlay communities where they stand in receiving the funds.

Announcing New Federal Resources to Improve Airports in Northwest Ohio

In the summer, Sen. Brown announced new federal resources to improve airports in Seneca, Wood, Ottawa, Defiance, Hardin, and Hancock Counties by enhancing their safety and capacity. Federal dollars that range from \$50,000 to about \$1 million will be used for various projects that will go a long way in sustaining travel in and out of the airports for Northwest Ohio residents and businesses. The money was awarded to the various counties and cities by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Calling for More Northwest Ohio Investments to Strengthen the Middle Class

Located in North Baltimore, the Northwest Ohio Intermodal Terminal is part of the National Gateway Project, which aims to build an efficient rail route linking Mid-Atlantic ports with Midwestern markets through rail infrastructure and intermodal terminals. Sen. Brown helped secure \$30 million in federal funds for the North Baltimore terminal in 2010 through the *American Reinvestment and Recovery Act*.

Sen. Brown joined Vice President Biden at the CSX Northwest Ohio Intermodal Terminal in November to call for additional investments in infrastructure that boost American competitiveness and help to create jobs, grow the economy, and strengthen the middle class.

Protecting Passengers by Requiring Seatbelts on all Ohio Motor Coaches

Sen. Brown applauded the November announcement by the National Highway Traffic Safety



Administration (NHTSA) that all new motor coaches and other large buses will have lap and shoulder seat belts for passengers beginning in November 2016. Following a bus crash involving members of the Bluffton University baseball team, Sen. Brown worked alongside Ohio families, including John and Joy Betts, whose son David died in the Bluffton accident, to introduce and pass bipartisan legislation addressing tour bus safety.

In October, Sen. Brown visited with John and Joy at the David Betts Double Play Diamond, an indoor baseball diamond and batting cage facility built in honor of David Betts in the City of Bryan. Seven Ohioans died in the Bluffton University crash, including five members of the

baseball team. Equipping buses with seat belts is a common-sense safety measure that is long overdue.

Supporting Servicemembers, Veterans, and Law Enforcement

Bringing more jobs to Mansfield Air Base

Sen. Brown announced in March that the Mansfield Air National Guard will receive a new mission and eight C-130H planes from the Air Force, resulting in the creation of over 180 jobs at Mansfield Air National Guard Base.

Sen. Brown was instrumental in keeping the Mansfield base open, working to see that it received new planes. In February, Sen. Brown met with then Secretary of Defense Nominee Sen. Chuck Hagel. During the meeting, Sen. Brown pressed Secretary Hagel on his support for a new mission at Mansfield and reminded him of President Obama's commitment to the base and finding it a new mission.

In July 2013, Sen. Brown, Co-Chairman of the U.S. Senate Air Force Caucus, wrote to General Dennis McCarthy, chair of the National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force, encouraging the Commission to use Ohio as a model for the rest of the nation. Sen. Brown explained that Ohio's unique mix of active, reserve, and Guard units offer the Commission a case study from which to apply its lessons to other states across the country.

Sen. Brown helped secure funding for the construction of the new \$6.8 million RED HORSE facility at the base to support the administration, operations, logistics, and training of a 202-member self-sustaining heavy construction unit. The Armed Forces Reserve Center is a new, \$16 million facility used for administrative, storage, and training purposes. It also houses the 3rd Platoon of the Army Reserve 486th Engineers.

Ensuring Workforce Stability at Lima Tank Plant

The Abrams tank is vital to our national security and developing its production and modernization is critical to our military readiness and preparedness. In February, Sen. Brown met then nominee for Secretary of Defense, former Sen. Chuck Hagel, to press him for continued production of the M1A2 Abrams tank. The Lima tank plant is a key part of Allen County's economy, and continued investment in the Abrams tank program will help ensure that this remains the case.

Helping Lucas County Veterans Receive Disability Benefits

In August, Sen. Brown called on the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to make immediate and necessary changes in order to eliminate its backlog of 500,000 claims filed by disabled veterans and their caregivers for services and benefits they have earned. Joined by a Lucas County Veterans Service Officer and an Air Force veteran who has waited more than two years to receive his disability benefits, Sen. Brown spoke at the Lucas County Veterans Service Commission to champion two pieces of legislation aimed at addressing the backlog.



The *Veterans Services Outreach Act*, introduced by Sen. Brown, would require the VA to notify veterans filing claims electronically that they can receive help and important time-saving information that could significantly reduce their wait time.

The *Claims Processing Improvement Act of 2013*, also supported by Sen. Brown, requires the VA to publically report information on both its projected monthly goals and actual production so that Congress and the public can know if the VA is working toward eliminating its backlog. The bill establishes a task force to hire and train claims processors and develop tactics to attack and eliminate the backlog.

Helping Northwest Ohio Veterans Find Employment

Veterans who serve their country deserve every opportunity to find work when they come home. They are among our most talented civilians but are too often unable to get credentialed for the training they've received while in the service. The unemployment rate among recent Iraq and Afghanistan veterans stands at nearly double Ohio's overall unemployment rate, despite the variety of skills offered by returning servicemembers.

In October, Sen. Brown announced a plan to help returning troops transfer their skills from military to civilian life. Joined by two naval veterans and the University of Toledo's military liaison at the University of Toledo Military Service Center, Sen. Brown outlined the *Troop Talent Act of 2013* would give troops an easier path to accreditation. The bill provides earlier and more frequent information to servicemembers during their military service about earning civilian credentials to match their specialty training and establishes strict standards for programs that guarantee credentialing. Finally, the *Troop Talent Act* increases access to high-demand career fields for servicemembers by expanding the Department of Defense credentialing program to high-growth fields such as information technology.

Providing Housing and Medical Assistance for Homeless Veterans in Northwest Ohio



The men and women of the Armed Forces have been made a promise that if they defend our country, a grateful nation will provide them with services and benefits they have earned. Unfortunately, many veterans find themselves faced with the challenge of homelessness.

In August, Sen. Brown announced federal resources to provide rental assistance and clinical services for homeless veterans in Lucas County as part of the Housing and Urban Development-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing voucher program. The funds will provide housing assistance for homeless veterans while partnering them with a local Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical center.

While many veterans in Northwest Ohio struggle with homelessness, the State Veterans Home in Sandusky, which provides housing for hundreds of veterans from around the state, has found itself with available beds that have gone unused as a result of restrictions on federal grants to aid homeless veterans.

In September, Sen. Brown and Rep. Marcy Kaptur introduced legislation that would allow the Sandusky facility to open up bed space for homeless veterans. The *State Veterans Home Homelessness Act* would make the Sandusky home and other state veterans' homes eligible for VA homelessness grants. This would allow the Sandusky facility the flexibility to expand its services to more elements of the veterans' community.

Presenting Overdue Military Honors to Huron County Veterans and Local Families

In 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued an executive order allowing African Americans to serve in the U.S. Marine Corps. Instead of serving in traditional boot camps, African American Marines were segregated and received basic training at Montford Point camp in North Carolina. Between 1942 and 1949, about 20,000 black soldiers received training at the camp. One of those soldiers was Corporal Winfield Finch, who joined the Marine Corps in 1944 and served in Guam and Hawaii.

In November, Sen. Brown helped secure the Congressional Gold Medal for Corporal Finch, and his office joined Marine officials in awarding the medal to Mr. Finch at a ceremony at the Ohio Veterans Home in Sandusky.

Sen. Brown also presented a Huron County veteran and the local families of deceased veterans several military honors they earned at an October ceremony in Norwalk. Sen. Brown's staff worked with the National Personnel Records Center and the U.S. Army to track down the long overdue medals.

Norwalk Mayor Rob Duncan and Dick Carlisle, the Huron County Veterans Services Officer, joined Sen. Brown in honoring veteran Ronald Dennison and deceased veterans Frederick Sturgeon, Donald Bahnsen, James Allen Jr., Richard Feaga, and John Goostree.

Protecting Northwest Ohio Consumers and the Middle Class

Standing Up for Workers' Right to Earn a Fair Wage in Bowling Green

In March, Sen. Brown joined the owner of Bowling Green's Grounds for Thought coffee shop and a single mother working a minimum wage job to call for passage of the *Fair Minimum Wage Act*. This legislation would raise the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour in three steps and provide the first minimum wage increase to tipped employees in more than 20 years. A higher minimum wage will help workers provide greater opportunities for their families, support local businesses, and build stronger communities.



Supporting Social Security, Medicare, and Healthcare

Standing with Toledo Children's Hospital to Combat Rare Pediatric Diseases

Though children make up 20 percent of the U.S. population, less than 10 percent of federal research dollars go toward research of pediatric conditions. Pediatric research institutions and pediatric researchers face real financial challenges that threaten their important work.

Alongside Rachel Burns, a Northwest Ohio teenager living with cystic fibrosis, Sen. Brown visited ProMedica Toledo Children's Hospital in February to unveil legislation aimed at designating more funding for pediatric medical research. The *National Research Network Act* would improve investments in pediatric research and help children overcome numerous devastating diseases and conditions.

In November, Congress passed and President Obama signed the *National Pediatric Research Network Act*, bipartisan legislation Sen. Brown introduced that will create a more streamlined and efficient system for maximizing pediatric medical research with an emphasis on rare pediatric diseases. Several Ohio children's hospitals, including the Toledo Children's Hospital, will benefit from this new law. This builds on momentum from an earlier announcement by Sen. Brown that the Senate passed legislation to reauthorize funding for the Children's Hospitals Graduate Medical Education (CHGME) program to ensure that doctors have the right training to treat sick children.

Protecting Children with Severe Allergic Reactions at School

In December, Sen. Brown visited McKinley Elementary School in Toledo to highlight his cosponsorship of the *School Access to Emergency Epinephrine Act*, legislation signed into law by President Obama that gives priority federal funding to states to ensure that all schools maintain a supply of epinephrine.

Sen. Brown also applauded the passage of Ohio House Bill 296 which would allow Ohio schools to maintain emergency epinephrine, but stressed the need for further action in order for Ohio to be eligible for these expanded federal resources.

Fighting for Healthcare for Low-Income Ohioans

In October, Sen. Brown visited the Integrated Health Center at Recovery Services of Northwest Ohio, a new partnership providing mental and physical health care to low-income residents in Bryan. Sen. Brown also met with representatives of four organizations who are coordinating the program.

During his visit, Sen. Brown discussed his cosponsorship of the *Excellence in Mental Health Act*, the *Mental Health Parity Act*, the *Children's Mental Health Parity Act*, and the *Seniors Mental Health Access Improvement Act*.

Strengthening Retirement Security for Northwest Ohio Seniors

Nearly two in three American seniors rely on the Social Security Trust Fund for at least half of their income in old age. For more than one-third of American seniors, it provides more than 90 percent of their income. And for one-quarter of American seniors, Social Security is their sole

source of income.

At a November gathering at the Margaret Hunt Senior Center in Toledo, Sen. Brown announced his support for the *Strengthening Social Security Act of 2013*, legislation that would increase benefits for seniors and extend the solvency of the Social Security Trust Fund. The bill would expand benefits, strengthen the Social Security Trust Fund's future, and make retirement more secure for all Americans.

Sen. Brown was joined by Sam Burnett, a seniors advocate and Ohio Seniors Hall of Fame inductee. Mr. Burnett discussed the importance of this legislation and ensuring senior Social Security benefits are not cut.

Also joining Sen. Brown were two Northwest Ohio seniors who explained that many seniors rely on Social Security to stay out of poverty and retire with dignity. Toni Shultz is a 65-year-old retired nurse from Toledo Children's Hospital, and Early Bunts is an 85-year-old retired factory worker from the Hunt's canning plant in Toledo.



Advocating for Minority Communities

Supporting Immigration Reform and Northwest Ohio's Immigrant Communities

Northwest Ohio's communities, families, and businesses would benefit from the passage of meaningful immigration reform. To discuss the need for reform, Sen. Brown held numerous roundtables across the state, including a May roundtable in Toledo with immigrant advocates, farm and agricultural representatives, labor and clergy leaders, and others involved with immigrant communities.

Sen. Brown understands that immigrants are essential to Ohio's economy as workers and taxpayers. Ohio would lose \$4 billion in economic activity and roughly 26,019 jobs if all unauthorized immigrants were removed. In agriculture, 50 percent of the land in Ohio is classified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as "prime farmland," and 50-70 percent of all farm workers are unauthorized.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, immigration reform would increase the gross domestic product (GDP) by 3.3 percent by 2023 and 5.4 percent by 2033. Not only would GDP increase, the federal deficit would decrease by \$175 billion over the first 10 years and \$700 billion over the next 20 years. *The Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act*, supported by Sen. Brown, passed the Senate with bipartisan support in June. Sen. Brown remains hopeful that the House of Representatives will act on the bill in 2014.

Strengthening Northwest Ohio Neighborhoods

Urging Fairness for Ohio Homeowners Hurt by Mortgage Crisis

At the height of the housing crisis, a number of national lenders engaged in illegal practices that deeply harmed homeowners. At the beginning of 2013, federal regulators and ten lenders reached an agreement to address the large number of unlawful foreclosures that occurred when banks used illegal practices such as “robo-signing” to initiate foreclosure proceedings or failed to offer mortgage modifications or other measures that would keep people in their homes.

In January, Sen. Brown revealed how Ohioans would be affected by the deal, which requires banks to pay \$8.5 billion to homeowners who were hurt by the mortgage crisis. He was joined at the Toledo offices of Advocates for Basic Legal Equality (ABLE) by Belinda Brooks, a Northwest Ohio homeowner whose home was in foreclosure because of errors made by her mortgage servicer, and Kathy Broka of the Fair Housing Center, a Toledo homeowner advocacy and counseling organization. Sen. Brown also urged federal banking regulators and the U.S. Department of Justice to prevent financial companies from using tax deductions as part of their legal settlements, which would unfairly shift costs to taxpayers.

Rebuilding Toledo Neighborhoods Affected by the Housing Crisis

In June, Sen. Brown applauded the news of a \$27 million settlement between the National Fair Housing Alliance and Wells Fargo to rebuild Toledo communities affected by the housing crisis. The settlement was prompted by a complaint filed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and will promote home ownership, neighborhood stabilization, property rehabilitation, and development in local communities. While the settlement reached can in no way make up for discriminatory action taken by mortgage servicers that harmed Ohio families, it is one step forward to recovery.

Alerting Lucas County Families of Nutrition Assistance for Children in Summer Months

Nearly 30,000 needy children in Lucas County are eligible to receive critical nutrition assistance during the school year, but many go hungry in the summer months. The federally-funded Summer Food Service Program is designed to help children who rely on free or reduced priced lunches during the school year continue to have access to good nutrition after the school year ends.

With schools closing for the summer, Sen. Brown helped kick off summer food service at one of Lucas County’s nearly 100 feeding sites with a June visit to Garfield Elementary School in Toledo. Joined by local children receiving a meal and numerous feeding partners from the Toledo area, Sen. Brown encouraged local families to take advantage of the program.

Supporting Northwest Ohio's Agricultural and Rural Economy

Commending the Work of Hancock-Wood Electric Cooperative



Rural Electric Cooperatives play a critical role in many Ohio counties, serving rural consumers' energy needs and creating jobs for the region. Without an adequate energy infrastructure, rural communities cannot support manufacturing and agriculture or attract new businesses.

In March, Sen. Brown spoke to members of the Hancock-Wood Electric Cooperative (HWEC) for a legislative breakfast in North Baltimore. HWEC serves rural customers in ten Northwest Ohio counties including Allen, Erie, Hancock, Hardin, Henry, Putnam, Sandusky, Seneca, Wood, and Wyandot. Sen. Brown spoke with the group about the energy and economic development needs of rural Ohioans and championed policies that create jobs, protect the environment, and strengthen U.S. energy infrastructure.

Increasing Availability of Nutritious, Locally-Grown Food to Ohio Communities

Linking Ohio producers with Ohio consumers like schools and children makes sense. By increasing access to fresh, local foods, we can expand markets for Ohio's agricultural producers while improving health, creating jobs, and strengthening our economy.

Sen. Brown joined local farmers, restaurant owner Marty Lahey, and students at a Toledo school in May to outline new jobs' legislation. The *Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act* would expand markets for local farmers and producers while improving school lunches through the addition of more locally-grown fruits and vegetables. Sen. Brown outlined how his bill would support ongoing farm-to-school efforts and increase access to healthy foods. It provides funding to help farmers build infrastructure-like community kitchens to process and sell their food locally, break down barriers so that schools can purchase local food more easily, and provide schools with a credit to purchase local foods.

Calling on Congress to Restore Slashed Funds to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

The health of the Great Lakes is critical to the economic revitalization of Ohio and our country. According to the State of Ohio, more than \$10 billion of the state's nearly \$40 billion tourism industry is derived from counties along the Lake Erie shoreline. Protecting Lake Erie is critical for both the environment and the economy.

In July, Sen. Brown joined Rep. Kaptur to call on the House of Representatives to make immediate changes to a bill that would slash the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) budget by nearly 80 %, from \$285 million to just \$60 million. Later in the summer, Sen. Brown visited the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, one of the projects supported by the GLRI, to see first-hand the difference that GLRI funding is making in improving Lake Erie.

While future Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding levels are uncertain, Sen. Brown was pleased to announce in November a federal grant to Ohio of \$500,000 from the Fiscal Year 2013 GLRI fund. The grant will support both GLRI and the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement

and will be used to implement field studies and lab experiments to assess the quality of Lake Erie water. In particular, the studies and experiments are designed to help efforts to decrease harmful algal blooms that threaten drinking water and the thousands of fishing, boating, and recreation jobs that depend on clean and safe waters.

Leading the Fight to Keep Asian Carp out of Lake Erie

Just as harmful algal blooms threaten Lake Erie, so too do invasive species like Asian carp. In July, Sen. Brown called for passage of the bipartisan *Great Lakes Ecological and Economic Protection Act*, which would ensure that the Great Lakes are preserved for future generations and secure the millions of jobs they support by protecting the Lakes from a variety of ecological threats and invasive species like Asian carp.



In addition, provisions in a bill sponsored by Sen. Brown – the *Strategic Response to Asian Carp Invasion Act* – were included into the *Water Resources Development Act* (WRDA) passed by the Senate in May. These provisions would enable the federal government to have a more effective partnership with state and local entities that are working to slow the spread of Asian Carp.

In November, Sen. Brown joined 15 Senate colleagues to urge the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to work with Congress to develop a long term and sustainable strategy to protect the Great Lakes region and the Ohio River basin from Asian carp.

Southwest Ohio Regional Highlights

Creating Jobs and Promoting Economic Development

Expanding Job Training Programs at Cincinnati State

New federal resources will allow Cincinnati State Technical and Community College to expand its jobs training programs for unemployed workers. Sen. Brown announced that U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) funding will provide Cincinnati State with \$2.75 million to develop and expand innovative training programs in manufacturing. The resources will help serve veterans, displaced workers, older adults interested in manufacturing, and workers who lost their jobs due to unfair foreign trade and are eligible for Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA).



Sen. Brown is the author of the *Strengthening Employment Clusters to Organize Regional Success* (SECTORS) Act, which would help ensure that Ohioans have the skills to qualify for new, good-paying positions and that businesses can hire from a local, skilled workforce. The *SECTORS Act* tailors workforce development to the needs of regional industry, allowing more workers to receive placements and attracting more businesses to a given region. The bill would organize stakeholders like businesses, unions, education and training providers, and local workforce and education system administrators connected to a regional industry to develop plans for growing that industry. A range of groups are supporting the *SECTORS Act*, including the National Association of Manufacturers, who asked Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee leadership to include Sen. Brown's legislation in a larger job training package.

Fighting for the Future of Navistar's Springfield Plant

Sen. Brown met with Navistar International Corp. President and CEO Troy A. Clarke in June to discuss the company's manufacturing facility in Springfield. Sen. Brown worked with Clarke in addition to UAW Local 402 and local leadership to save the Springfield facility, which currently employs more than 850 Ohioans.

As Clark County's ninth-largest employer, the Navistar facility represents the forefront of advanced manufacturing in Ohio. In addition to making medium duty trucks, Navistar's new investment in Springfield will allow the facility to also produce MaxxPro military vehicles used by troops in Afghanistan and Iraq. The first such truck was built at the facility in April 2013.

Allowing the Delta Queen to Carry Passengers on Overnight Journeys

Sen. Brown joined with Sen. Rob Portman to introduce legislation that will allow the Delta Queen to carry passengers on overnight trips on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers.

The 1966 Safety at Sea law prohibits wooden ships of a certain size like the Delta Queen from carrying passengers on overnight trips. Sen. Brown's bill will grant a 15-year exemption to this rule, which was standard practice until 2008.

Listening to Dayton Citizens on Immigration Reform



Our country makes meaningful progress when students, families, and business owners tell their stories and call for meaningful change. Sen. Brown discussed comprehensive immigration reform with Miami Valley families, businesses, and community leaders during a visit to the Ahiska Turkish American Community Center of Dayton.

The roundtable focused on determining how immigration reform can be structured to maximize American economic prosperity, provide a path to citizenship with fair and rigorous requirements, impose tough sanctions on employers who break the law, and secure our borders.

Participants discussed high-skill (H-1B) and low-skill (H-2B) visas, family-based visas, and immigrant visas for STEM graduates, among other issues.

Strengthening Trade Enforcement to Protect Southwest Ohio Jobs

Protecting Cincinnati Jobs from Unfair Foreign Trade

Sen. Brown urged the International Trade Commission (ITC) to protect existing anti-dumping orders against unfairly traded imports of steel concrete rebar. A bipartisan group of senators sent a letter to ITC Chairman Irving Williamson. The ruling is critical to protecting American-made rebar, including that produced at the David J. Joseph Company and Byer Steel Group, both in Cincinnati, from rebar imports that are illegally undercutting the U. S. market.

Advocating on Behalf of Delphi Retirees

In December, Sen. Brown introduced legislation to expand and permanently extend the Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) for Delphi salaried retirees as a part of the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program. The *Health Care Coverage for Displaced Works Act* would permanently extend the HCTC so that it no longer requires constant reauthorization, and expand the HCTC to 80 percent, a nearly ten percent increase from the current rate.

In April 2013, Sen. Brown announced that the Department of the Treasury had agreed to meet with the Delphi Salaried Retirees Association (DSRA). This announcement came on the heels of Sen. Brown's efforts to push the Obama Administration to meet with the Delphi salaried retirees and to pursue efforts that would restore the retirees' pensions and benefits.

Helping Small Businesses Grow and Add Jobs

Working with Cincinnati Agencies to Attract Investment

New federal resources were awarded to two Cincinnati-based economic development agencies. Sen. Brown announced that the Cincinnati Development Fund and Kroger Community Development Entity were awarded \$35 million and \$20 million, respectively, through the New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) for Fiscal Year 2012. The NMTC program, administered by the U.S. Treasury Department, helps attract investment in underserved regions that would otherwise suffer from a lack of financing.

The Cincinnati Development Fund and Kroger Community Development Entity were awarded the tax credits to make equity investments to help finance local community development projects, cultivate economic growth, and create jobs.

Building Southwest Ohio Infrastructure and Transportation

Funding for the Brent Spence Bridge



The Brent Spence Bridge is critical to the economic well-being and safety of Southwest Ohio and its citizens. Sen. Brown announced his support for a bipartisan amendment to the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (THUD) Bill that would ensure only “functionally obsolete” or “structurally deficient” bridges, like Brent Spence, are eligible to receive federal funding. Sen. Brown has long fought to ensure that the Brent Spence Bridge Project receives the necessary funding for

its completion by working to insert the Projects of National and Regional Significance (PNRS) program in the *Moving Ahead and Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) Act*, which helps projects like the Brent Spence Bridge that are large in scale and fall under more than one jurisdiction.

Updating Infrastructure Needs in Adams County

In September, Sen. Brown announced new resources for an Adams County community to update sewage infrastructure and improve service. The Appalachian Regional Commission awarded a grant to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and the Village of Manchester to rehabilitate sewer infrastructure and improve capacity. The grant will allow for the relining of 54,600 linear feet of sewer lines and gravity sewers, 16 sanitary point repairs, and rehabilitation of 50 manholes. The grant will also support smaller projects including surface restoration, bypass pumping, maintenance of traffic, and pollution prevention measures.

Supporting Servicemembers, Veterans, and Law Enforcement

Calling on the VA to Reduce its Backlog

Sen. Brown is working with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to make immediate and necessary changes in order to help eliminate its backlog of more than 500,000 claims filed by disabled veterans and their caregivers for services and benefits they have earned. Sen. Brown

introduced and announced his support of two key pieces of legislation aimed at addressing the backlog.

He introduced the *Veterans Services Outreach Act*, legislation that would require the VA to notify veterans filing claims electronically that they can receive help and important time-saving information that could significantly improve their claim and reduce their wait time. Sen. Brown is also working to pass the *Claims Processing Improvement Act of 2013*, legislation that would hold the VA accountable by requiring it to publically report information on both its projected monthly goals and actual production so that Congress and the public know if the VA is working toward eliminating its backlog. The bill would also establish a task force to hire and train claims processors and develop tactics to attack and eliminate the backlog.



Sen. Brown held a veterans' roundtable discussion in Dayton and was joined by Montgomery County Veterans Service Commission Director Herb Davis, as well as surrounding county veteran service offices and local posts to specifically discuss backlog issues.

Helping Southwest Ohio Veterans Find Employment

Veterans who serve their country deserve every opportunity to find work when they come home. Sen. Brown, a senior member of the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs, was in Cincinnati to outline a plan that would reduce unemployment among recently-returned servicemembers and ease their transition into the civilian workforce.



While servicemembers acquire significant training and skills in the military, often these talents are not easily transferred into civilian employment credentials. In fact, the unemployment rate among recent Iraq and Afghanistan veterans is nearly double Ohio's overall unemployment rate.

At Cincinnati's SuperJobs Center, Sen. Brown outlined how the *Troop Talent Act of 2013* would help veterans better utilize the skills they have acquired in the military to find full-time employment when they transition back to civilian life. The bill would ensure a clearer and easier path to matching military skills with civilian accreditation.

Sen. Brown also traveled to Dayton's American Legion Post 675 to discuss this important piece of legislation. Sen. Brown was joined by Master Sgt. Tyler Cobb, an Ohio Army National Guardsman who struggled to find work when he returned from Iraq. Master Sgt. Cobb served as an intelligence specialist during his service, but despite his knowledge and experience in the intelligence field, he has been unable to find work to utilize those skills.

Sen. Brown is a leading advocate for Ohio veterans in the U.S. Senate. As an original cosponsor of the *VOW to Hire Heroes Act*, Sen. Brown has fought to decrease unemployment for Ohio veterans by connecting them to job retraining programs and transition assistance.

Resources to Provide Housing for Homeless Veterans in Cincinnati

Sen. Brown announced new federal resources to provide renovated housing and transportation for homeless veterans in Cincinnati as a part of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Grant and Per Diem (GPD) Program. The resources will allow the Talbert House in Cincinnati to renovate its facility and address the safety, security, and privacy needs of the homeless veterans served. Talbert House will also receive resources to acquire a new van which will provide outreach and transportation support to homeless veterans.



According to the VA, the GPD Program helps close gaps in available housing for the nation's most vulnerable homeless veterans. The Talbert House received two GPD grants including a \$20,543 grant to acquire a van, and a \$221,247 grant to renovate the housing facility.

Sen. Brown was at the forefront of combating veteran homelessness in 2013, calling for increased resources to confront the problem. In December, he announced his support of the *Homeless Veterans Prevention Act* that would seek to end veteran homelessness by 2015. The legislation would improve and expand existing programs offered by local service organizations and the VA.

Presenting Medals to Southwest Ohio Veterans

Ohio's veterans made invaluable contributions to our fight for worldwide peace and democracy. Our state's servicemembers have answered the call to action without delay throughout our nation's history.

In April, Sen. Brown presented overdue or replacement medals earned for military service to 11 southwest Ohio veterans. The presentation was held at the Woodlawn Parks and Recreation Department where the Ohio National Guard trains. Army Brigadier General John C. Harris Jr. also helped present the medals.

Honoring the Doolittle Tokyo Raiders with the Congressional Gold Medal

In November, the Senate passed legislation to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the Doolittle Tokyo Raiders. Sen. Brown, the original author of the legislation, led the effort to obtain 78 bipartisan Senate cosponsors. The legislation followed a Senate Resolution that Sen. Brown introduced in 2012 on the 70th Anniversary of the mission.

In the first offensive action by the U.S. military following the attack on Pearl Harbor, 80 men who became known as the Doolittle Tokyo Raiders volunteered for an "extremely hazardous mission" without knowing the target, location, or assignment. The raiders, led by Lieutenant Colonel James Doolittle, launched their B-25 Mitchell Bombers 650 miles from their target. After hitting their military and industrial targets in Tokyo and five other cities, they were low on fuel and facing deteriorating weather. As a result, all 16 airplanes were forced to crash-land in China or Russia.

A Congressional Gold Medal will be awarded to each of the four surviving members of the Doolittle Raiders. The evening Sen. Brown introduced the legislation, the fifth surviving crew member, Major Tom Griffin, a Cincinnati-native, passed away. Major Griffin was the Navigator on Plane #9. His medal will be presented to his next of kin. In addition to the Raiders, the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force in Dayton will receive a sixth medal to be displayed with the Doolittle Tokyo Raider's goblets currently on display.

Promoting Aerospace and Aviation Development in the Miami Valley

Ohio has a rich history as a leader in the aviation and aerospace industries. With continued research and development in unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) technologies, the Miami Valley is well positioned to serve as a nerve center for advanced research, training, and development in the industry. During a February meeting with then nominee for Secretary of Defense, former Sen. Chuck Hagel, Sen. Brown urged for support in expanding UAS development in Ohio.

"When confirmed, I hope Sen. Hagel will be a partner in securing increased opportunities for UAS technological advancement," said Sen. Brown at the time. "Ohio's government research labs, top-tier universities, and vibrant private research sector make our state an ideal FAA test site."

UAS will play a critical role in border security measures, wildfire suppression, and search and rescue missions.

Protecting Critical Work at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base

During a meeting with the nominee for the Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James, Sen. Brown pressed the importance of protecting critical research and development programs at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Sen. Brown discussed a number of his Ohio priorities with Ms. James during a meeting in Sen. Brown's office, including his support for the Air Force Materiel Command mission headquartered at Wright-Patterson.



In July 2013, Sen. Brown, who serves as co-Chairman of the U.S. Senate Air Force Caucus, sent a letter to General Dennis McCarthy, chair of the National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force, encouraging the commission to use Ohio as a model for the rest of the nation. Sen. Brown explained that Ohio's unique mix of active, reserve, and Guard units offer the Commission a case study from which to apply its lessons to other states across the country.

Nominating a New U.S. Marshal for the Southern District of Ohio

Sen. Brown was pleased to announce President Obama's nomination of Peter Tobin to serve as the U.S. Marshal for the Southern District of Ohio. Peter Tobin's wealth of experience and commitment to serving others has uniquely prepared him for a position as the U.S. Marshal for the Southern District of Ohio. Tobin is a veteran of the Army and Ohio Army National Guard. This experience, his career with the Columbus Police department where he began as a patrolman before earning command of its SWAT team, and his experience as Chief of Police in both Powell

and London where he exemplified his dedication to crime prevention and fighting the drug trade, make him an ideal public servant.

Standing with Southwest Ohio Police

Collective bargaining rights are fundamental to ensuring that workers have the tools, resources, and protective gear necessary to do a job properly.

Sen. Brown thanked police officers for their work to preserve collective bargaining rights at the Fraternal Order of Police's 61st National Conference and Exposition held in Cincinnati in August.



Sen. Brown was joined by U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano at the annual event which brought 3,500 delegates and their families from across the country to Cincinnati.

Protecting Southwest Ohio Consumers and the Middle Class

Preventing Illegal Resale of Stolen Phones

With cell phone theft on the rise – endangering Ohioans and consuming critical police department resources – Sen. Brown announced a plan to deter theft by preventing the illegal resale of stolen phones. He was joined by Hamilton County Sheriff Jim Neil and a Cincinnati resident whose phone was stolen at a local dog park.

Sen. Brown also spoke in Trotwood and was joined by Trotwood Police Chief Quincy Pope Sr. and a 17 year-old Trotwood resident who had his phone stolen when a man followed him off the bus he was riding.

Criminals often target cell phones because they can easily be resold on the black market. Currently, most carriers only deactivate a stolen cell phone's SIM card rather than the entire phone. While carriers have agreed to work with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to set up a database of unique cell phone identification numbers to allow stolen cell phones to be entirely deactivated, some criminals are tampering with those unique identifiers known as International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) numbers to avoid detection. Sen. Brown announced legislation that he is cosponsoring that would impose criminal penalties for tampering with cell phone IMEIs.

Calling on a Raise of the Minimum Wage in Dayton



Sen. Brown traveled to Dayton's historic Oregon District and was joined by local restaurant owner Bob Mendenhall and his workers as he announced his support for legislation to raise the minimum wage. Thousands of Miami Valley workers would receive a raise under new legislation. The *Fair Minimum Wage Act* would raise the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour in three steps and provide the first minimum wage increase to

tipped employees in more than 20 years. Workers who are paid a minimum wage in Ohio earn only \$16,000 per year, more than \$3,000 below the poverty level for a family of three. The *Fair Minimum Wage Act* would boost the minimum wage to \$21,000, lifting families above the poverty line. According to the National Employment Law Project, the minimum wage has lost more than 30 percent in real value over the last forty years. If the minimum wage had kept up with inflation, it would be worth approximately \$10.55 per hour today.

Supporting Social Security, Medicare, and Healthcare

Helping Southwest Ohioans Purchase Health Insurance

Sen. Brown joined Crossroad Health Center CEO Sally Stewart and a Warren County small-business owner to alert residents in Southwest Ohio to new resources and local help available for signing up for the new health care marketplace. Sen. Brown, who declined Congressional health insurance for nearly two decades—keeping a 1992 campaign promise to decline a health plan until similar coverage is available to all Americans—will enter the marketplace during this enrollment period.

Protecting Children with Severe Allergic Reactions

Sen. Brown visited Fairview German Language School in Cincinnati and River's Edge Montessori School in Dayton to highlight his cosponsorship of the *School Access to Emergency Epinephrine Act*, legislation signed into law by President Obama that gives priority federal funding to states that ensure that all schools maintain a supply of epinephrine.

Sen. Brown also applauded the passage of Ohio House Bill 296 which allows Ohio schools to maintain emergency epinephrine, but stressed the need for further action to be taken by the Ohio Legislature so the state can receive these expanded federal resources.

Securing New Resources for Community Health Center Development in Warren & Montgomery Counties

Community health centers play a vital role in helping Ohioans obtain access to primary and preventative health care services. Sen. Brown announced that Talbert House Health Center, a medical center serving Warren County, and Five Rivers Health Centers in Montgomery County received new resources from the Department of Health and Human Services to support and develop new primary care health services. The funds, made possible by the *Affordable Care Act*, will help serve an additional 59,806 patients statewide. These new federal resources will help provide affordable and accessible health care to Ohio's children, seniors, and parents.

Strengthening Pediatric Research in Ohio Children's Hospitals

In November, Congress passed and President Obama signed the *National Pediatric Research Network Act*, bipartisan legislation Sen. Brown introduced that will create a more streamlined and efficient system for maximizing pediatric medical research with an emphasis on rare pediatric diseases.



Although children make up about 20 percent of our population, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) dedicates only five to 10 percent of its annual research budget to pediatrics. The new law will ensure that the NIH investment in pediatric research optimizes those resources. Several Ohio children's hospitals, including Cincinnati's Children's Hospital and Medical Center and Dayton's Children's Medical Center, will benefit from this new law.

This success built on momentum from an earlier announcement by Sen. Brown that the Senate had passed legislation to reauthorize funding for the Children's Hospitals Graduate Medical Education (CHGME) program to ensure that doctors have the right training to treat sick children.

Seeking an End to Pancreatic Cancer at Cincinnati Purple Stride 5k

At the closing ceremonies of the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PANCAN)'s Purple Stride 5K, Sen. Brown applauded the group's efforts to wipe out the disease.



"The work done by the Pancreatic Cancer Action network can make the difference between life and death, and hope and despair," Sen. Brown said at the September 28 race in Cincinnati. Sen. Brown also discussed the *Recalcitrant Cancer Research Act*, which was passed in the Senate in November 2012 and signed into law in January 2013.

PANCAN is a national organization dedicated to creating hope through research, patient support, community outreach, and advocacy for a cure.

Strengthening Southwest Ohio's Neighborhoods

Providing Affordable Housing and Supporting Jobs in Butler County

Sen. Brown announced that the Neighborhood Housing Partnership of Hamilton, Inc. will have the opportunity to revitalize the communities in its area, promote affordable housing, and create or sustain jobs through local projects. NeighborWorks America, a congressionally-created partnership between community, public, and private stakeholders that distributes capital for improving communities and creating jobs, awarded the program with new resources. This will allow the Neighborhood Housing Partnership of Hamilton, Inc. to expand their reach to more Ohioans throughout the community and expand the range of services they provide.

Improving Dayton's Housing Market by Addressing "Short Sales"



With one-third of Montgomery County homeowners underwater on their mortgages, Sen. Brown unveiled a plan that would improve the housing market by addressing "short sale" home sales. Short sales are real estate transactions that must be approved by the bank because the seller owes more on their mortgage than the proposed sale price. Sen. Brown outlined how the *Prompt Notification of Short Sale Act* would improve the process for both sellers and buyers involved in "short sale" transactions and bolster the housing market and Ohio's economic recovery.

Supporting Southwest Ohio's Agricultural and Rural Economy

Expanding Resources for the Agriculture and Food Science Program at Wilmington College

In April, Sen. Brown announced new resources to expand the agriculture and food science program at Wilmington College, after having previously urged the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development to approve a loan that would update and expand the facility while advancing the current curriculum.

USDA awarded a \$19.7 million, 30-year loan through its Community Facilities program. The loan will finance the rehabilitation and expansion of Kettering Hall, which houses the agriculture and food science program. The project also includes resources for 35,000 square feet of state-of-the-art classrooms and laboratories in a Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design certified and Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant community existing space, as well as construction of a 13,500 square foot addition.

Legislation and Issues

The following pages provide an overview of Sen. Brown's major legislative actions in 2013.

Jobs and the Economy

Putting American Interests First

Sen. Brown believes that our trade policy has not promoted our economic interests. He has led the fight to make trade enforcement a matter of practice by requiring the government to take action when China or any trade partner does not follow the rules.

Holding other Countries Accountable on Currency



Currency manipulation is the buying and selling of currency in the international exchange market for the purpose of increasing a country's domestic monetary value. Unfortunately, this practice can have extreme negative impacts on the U.S. dollar, affecting U.S. industries and economies throughout the world.

The *Brown-Sessions-Schumer-Graham-Burr-Stabenow-Collins-Casey Currency Exchange Rate Oversight Act of 2013*, introduced in June 2013, will reform and enhance oversight of currency exchange rates. This strong, bipartisan bill passed the Senate in October 2011, though was not passed by the House of Representatives in the 112th Congress. It uses U.S. trade law to counter the economic harm to U.S. manufacturers caused by currency manipulation, provides consequences for countries that fail to adopt appropriate policies to eliminate currency misalignment, and includes tools to address the impact of currency misalignment on U.S. industries.

Improving Oversight of Currency Exchange Rates

Under current law, the Department of the Treasury is required to identify countries that manipulate their currency for purposes of gaining an unfair competitive trade advantage. In recent years, the Treasury has found that certain countries' currencies were undervalued. However, based on its interpretation of the law's legal standard for a finding of "manipulation", the Treasury has refused to cite such countries as currency manipulators. The *Currency Exchange Rate Oversight Act* repeals the currency provisions in current law and replaces them with a new framework based on objective criteria that will require the Treasury to identify misaligned currencies and require action by the administration if countries fail to correct the misalignment.

Clarifying Countervailing Duty Law to Address Currency Undervaluation

Under existing trade laws, if the Department of Commerce and the International Trade Commission find that subsidized imports are causing economic harm to American manufacturers and workers, the administration must impose duties on those imports to offset ("countervail") the benefit conferred on foreign producers and exporters by the government subsidies.

Including WTO-Consistent, Key Provision in Currency Legislation

In previous countervailing duty investigations, the Department of Commerce (DoC) has refused to find an export subsidy if the subsidy is not limited exclusively to circumstances of export (i.e. when non-exporters also may benefit). The *Currency Exchange Rate Oversight Act* precludes the DoC from imposing this bright-line rule and clarifies that the DoC may not refuse to investigate a subsidy allegation based on the single fact that a subsidy is available in circumstances in addition to export. This clarification is supported by dispute settlement rulings of the World Trade Organization's Appellate Body (e.g. in the case involving taxation of foreign sales corporations) and is the key element of the bipartisan Levin-Murphy H.R. 1276, the *Currency Reform for Fair Trade Act*.

Establishing New Objective Criteria to Identify Misaligned Currencies



The *Currency Exchange Rate Oversight Act* requires the Department of the Treasury to develop a biannual report to Congress that identifies two categories of currencies: (1) a general category of “fundamentally misaligned currencies” based on observed objective criteria and (2) a select category of “fundamentally misaligned currencies for priority action” that reflects misaligned currencies caused by clear policy actions by the relevant government.

Requiring New Consultations and Triggering Tough Consequences

The legislation requires the Treasury to engage in immediate consultations with all countries cited in the report. For “priority” currencies, the Treasury would seek advice from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as well as key trading partners.

For “priority” currencies, important consequences are triggered unless a country adopts policies to eliminate the misalignment. Immediately upon designation of a “priority” currency, the administration must:

- Oppose any IMF governance changes that benefit a country whose currency is designated for priority action.
- Consider designation of a country's currency as a “priority” currency when determining whether to grant the country “market economy” status for purpose of U.S. antidumping law.

After 90 days of failure to adopt appropriate policies, the administration must:

- Reflect currency undervaluation in dumping calculations for products produced or manufactured in the designated country.
- Forbid federal procurement of goods and services from the designated country unless that country is a member of the WTO Government Procurement Agreement (GPA).
- Request the IMF to engage the designated country in special consultations over its misaligned currency.

- Forbid Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) financing or insurance for projects in the designated country.
- Oppose new multilateral bank financing for projects in the designated country.
- After 360 days of failure to adopt appropriate policies, the administration must:
- Require the U.S. Trade Representative to request dispute settlement consultations in the WTO with the government responsible for the currency.
- Require the Department of the Treasury to consult with the Federal Reserve Board and other central banks to consider remedial intervention in currency markets.

Limiting Presidential Waiver

President Obama could initially waive the consequences that take effect after the first 90 days if such action would harm national security or the vital economic interest of the United States. However, the President must explain to the Congress in writing how the adverse impact of taking an action would be greater than the potential benefits of such action. Any subsequent economic waiver would require President Obama to explain how the adverse impact of taking an action would be substantially out of proportion to the benefits of such action. Furthermore, any member of Congress may thereafter introduce a joint resolution of disapproval concerning President Obama's waiver. Should the disapproval resolution be approved, President Obama may veto it, and the Congress would have the opportunity to override the veto.

Establishing a New Consultative Body

The *Currency Exchange Rate Oversight Act* would create a new body with which the Department of the Treasury must consult during the development of its report. Of the nine members, one would be selected by the President and the remainder by the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the Senate Banking and Finance Committees, as well as the Financial Services and House Ways and Means Committees. The members must have demonstrated expertise in finance, economics, or currency exchange.



Fighting for a Trans-Pacific Partnership that Works for Ohioans

While the American economy is recovering from the credit crisis and is adding new jobs and investment in Ohio, the prospect of a "Trans-Pacific Partnership" (TPP) with a number of Pacific-rim nations, including Japan, poses a new challenge. Historically, Japan has not had an open trading system, intentionally keeping its huge auto market closed in order to prop up its domestic auto companies. In fact, Japan exports 130 vehicles here for every one American vehicle exported to Japan. Sen. Brown has signed on to several letters to the Obama Administration pushing for Japan to make commitments on market access and currency reform, at a minimum, in any TPP deal.

Enforcing Labor Rights and Environmental Standards

Sen. Brown has long believed that improved labor rights are key to our trade agenda. Referred to by trade insiders as the "May 10 Agreement," Sen. Brown supports the May 10 Agreement as

a “floor” in TPP negotiations. This agreement marked a commitment that the TPP countries would adopt, maintain, and enforce the basic International Labour Organization (ILO) standards. The agreement also includes a fully enforceable commitment that TPP countries adopt, implement, and enforce obligations under seven multilateral environmental agreements.

Access to Medicines: Sen. Brown has advocated for greater access to generic medicines, including more relaxed rules on test data of drugs to allow generics to enter the market more quickly than previous rules allowed and to maintain U.S. laws on biologics.

State-owned Enterprises (SOE): Sen. Brown has been a strong advocate for disciplines on SOEs, including specifics on the definition of SOEs, the activities of SOEs, and determining an injury test to address anticompetitive impact. In 2011, he sent a letter to the United States Trade Representative (USTR) on the issue with Sen. Kyl of Arizona, and again led colleagues in a letter to USTR in 2013.

Rules of Origin: This is an increasingly significant issue in TPP-related to determining the domestic content required in a good to receive benefits under the TPP. In March 2013, Sen. Brown led a letter with Sen. Casey of Pennsylvania advocating for stronger rules of origin in the TPP, specifically supporting the 62.5 percent established by North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). This rule would affect a variety of manufacturing sectors, and Sen. Brown is working to protect Ohio jobs, whether they are glassware jobs in Toledo and Lancaster, bearings jobs in Sandusky, or iron jobs in Coshocton.

Textiles and Apparel: Sen. Brown has advocated for “yarn forward” rules-of-origin in the TPP that would maintain the standard that yarn used to form fabric must originate in one of the TPP countries. This is one of the more significant issues in the TPP because Vietnam sources most of its yarn from China and is thus seeking the most flexible interpretation of this standard. In May 2013, Sen. Brown led a letter to USTR expressing concerns about yarn forward in TPP.



Tobacco: In August 2013, USTR backtracked from an earlier proposal on tobacco that would expose public health and anti-tobacco initiatives to trade challenges, specifically under the investor-state mechanism. Sen. Brown sent a letter to the United States Trade Representative, Ambassador Froman, in September, followed by a meeting with him. He also joined a letter led by Sen. Durbin on the same topic in November 2013. This remains a contentious issue and one that might be suited for an amendment in the mark-up of Trade Promotion Authority (TPA).

Pork exports: Sen. Brown joined a letter with Sens. Donnelly and Grassley that was sent to USTR and USDA Secretary Vilsack in December 2013, requesting elimination of non-tariff barriers to pork exports in the TPP.

Making Trade Promotion Authority Work for Ohioans

Legislation granting the President trade negotiating authority needs to reflect the changing nature of international trade and the lessons learned over the past decade, a decade in which the United States has suffered from the largest trade deficits in our history, placing a drag on economic growth, job creation, and wages. In particular, legislation must strengthen the role of Congress in the negotiations, and it must strengthen the rules of competition and include a broad competitiveness strategy so that U.S. workers and businesses have the tools to compete in the global marketplace. That is why Sen. Brown has been working with Reps. Sandy Levin and Michael Michaud on a number of reforms to TPA.

The need for better consultations with Congress as part of our trade agenda has never been more important. Trade agreements today address a broad range of policy areas, from antitrust to public health measures, so more Members of Congress must play a role. Congress as a whole must play a greater role in the development and oversight of those agreements. We must strengthen the partnership between Congress and the Obama Administration by improving access to negotiating information, putting in place mechanisms to ensure meaningful consultations, and ensuring that expedited and preferential consideration by Congress will apply only if negotiating objectives are achieved. Congress must have a role before negotiations begin and throughout the process, not just at the end in an up or down vote.



Trade legislation must also stand up for our country and its businesses and workers as they prepare to fully compete in the global economy. Our primary focus must be on creating domestic jobs and opportunity. Sen. Brown's advocacy of a trade and competitiveness agenda recognizes that Congress must address foreign currency undervaluation which some studies indicate may account for about half of U.S. trade deficits and may account for half of excess U.S. unemployment in the United States. A real competitiveness agenda includes other measures to strengthen our trade laws and the enforcement of our trade agreements, helps to rebuild our crumbling infrastructure, and includes provisions to strengthen competitiveness and programs to retrain workers impacted by global trade.

Competitiveness: In addition to the TPA reforms, Sen. Brown has advocated for a broader package of initiatives to prepare workers and companies for taking advantage of export opportunities including strong trade enforcement measures, penalties for currency manipulation, infrastructure investments, and trade adjustment assistance. Much of this was outlined in a June 2013 speech at the Center for American Progress.

The draft competitiveness legislation assembled includes a number of trade enforcement measures suggested by the Committee to Save U.S. Trade Laws (CSUSTL).

Trade enforcement: In addition to the trade enforcement measures referenced in the TPA "competitiveness" package,



Sen. Brown is a strong advocate for domestic industry petitions for antidumping and countervailing duties remedies.

Buy America: In the 112th and 113th Congresses, Sen. Brown advocated for strengthening ‘Buy America’ requirements for iron and steel products in the State Revolving Loan Fund, which provides funding for water infrastructure projects. Working with Sen. Jack Reed, Sen. Brown included language, modeled on the ARRA ‘Buy America’ language, in the Interior Appropriations bill for fiscal year (FY) 2014.



Wool Tariff: Sen. Brown continued to extend efforts to reauthorize the Wool and Cotton Trust Funds, which give relief resources to Hugo Boss’s Brooklyn factory, one of the last domestic suit manufacturers. By way of background, our trade laws have disadvantaged domestic suit makers and their employees. The tariffs on imported suiting fabric are some of the highest of any product and far exceed the duty rates leveled against imported suits and sport coats. This has made it more expensive to remain a domestic manufacturer than to move offshore. A special North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) rule allows Canadian and Mexican suit manufacturers duty-free access to the U.S. even when they import suits made of non-NAFTA fabrics. This special rule has created an export industry in Canada and Mexico at the expense of U.S. jobs.

Sen. Brown has been working with the Senate Finance Committee and Senate Agriculture Committee to reauthorize and fund this program to help maintain suit production in Brooklyn.

Standing Up for Workers in Ohio and throughout the World

Creating a Nation Manufacturing Network and Developing Innovation

During an April meeting with then Secretary of Defense nominee Sen. Chuck Hagel, Sen. Brown pressed the importance of creating a National Network for Manufacturing Innovation (NNMI) like the first-of-its-kind National Additive Manufacturing Innovation Institute (NAMII) in Youngstown. Sen. Brown knows that we must give American workers the opportunity to out-innovate the rest of world. By creating institutions like Mahoning Valley’s NAMII, we can take that first step while creating jobs, strengthening our national security, and ensuring our nation has the ability to produce the material and systems necessary to support our men and women in uniform. Sen. Brown also hopes to help establish more next-generation manufacturing centers like NAMII in Youngstown. President Obama specifically cited the NAMII in his 2013 State of the Union address and has previously expressed support for a NNMI in his budget proposals.



In August, Sens. Brown and Blunt introduced the *Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act of 2013*, which would authorize manufacturing hubs similar to the proposed NNMI. Both offered and passed a deficit-neutral reserve fund amendment to the Budget resolution supporting the establishment of the NNMI.

The *Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act of 2013* amends the *National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Act* to direct the Secretary of Commerce to establish within NIST a Network for Manufacturing Innovation Program. The program would improve the competitiveness of U.S. manufacturing and increase domestic production, stimulate U.S. leadership in advanced manufacturing research, innovation, and technology, and accelerate the development of an advanced manufacturing workforce.

Sen. Brown held a Commerce Committee hearing where he urged passage of the bipartisan legislation: “We know that manufacturing has strong ripple effects on the rest of our economy and helped to grow America’s middle class,” Sen. Brown said. “That is why it’s necessary that we maintain the United States’ role as a global leader in emerging technologies. The *Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act of 2013* would do this by ensuring American workers, universities, and large and small manufacturers can out-compete and out-innovate the rest of the world. This would lead to better jobs, better wages, and a better future for the United States and its middle class.”

Fighting to End Workplace Discrimination

Millions of Americans can be fired because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. More than 27 percent of lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) employees reported discrimination in the workplace. Sen. Brown is working to end this culture of workplace discrimination. On May 6, he cosponsored the *Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA)*, which passed the Senate in November. ENDA would prevent employers from discriminating against any employee for his or her actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

Studies suggest that this workplace discrimination against LGBT Americans is far too common.

Sen. Brown believes that all employees must be treated equally and with the respect that they deserve. Passing ENDA will end discrimination against LGBT employees and bring us one step closer to full equality for all members of society.



Sen. Brown is a longtime supporter of LGBT equality. He is one of just a handful of sitting senators who voted against the controversial *Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA)* in 1996 during his service as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives. Earlier in 2013, as the Supreme Court heard arguments on the DOMA, he joined an amicus brief asking the Court to overturn the law. DOMA, which prohibits federal recognition of same-sex marriages, also denies LGBT couples many of the federal benefits and protections that other married couples enjoy.

Sen. Brown supports equality of opportunity for all Americans and, in addition to ENDA, has previously cosponsored the *Student Nondiscrimination Act (SNDA)* and the *Safe Schools Improvement Act* to end discrimination and bullying.

Protecting Workers Overseas

Following the world’s deadliest garment worker accident at the Rana Plaza factory in Bangladesh in April, Sen. Brown led a group of eight Senators in writing to major retailers

urging them to reconsider signing the *Accord on Fire Safety* in Bangladesh. The letter argued that only a legally-binding, global accord signed by U.S. and European retailers, rather than self-monitoring or voluntary initiatives, would ensure worker safety in Bangladesh, where workers face hazardous conditions for a minimum wage of \$38 per month.

“Just over one hundred years ago, a similar tragic accident – the Triangle Shirt Waist fire – spurred action to reform the treatment and safety of garment workers in the United States,” the letter read. “Now, in the aftermath of the Rana Plaza tragedy – the deadliest garment worker accident the world has seen – it is time to take clear, concrete steps to protect worker safety and worker rights in Bangladesh and around the world.”

The letter continued: “We urge you to reconsider your decision not to sign the Accord and sign on promptly. European and American retailers purchase two-thirds of Bangladeshi garment production and provide your companies with tremendous market influence and power to ensure that workers, many of whom toil for the Bangladeshi minimum wage of \$38 per month, have safe working conditions and a voice in the workplace.”

Strengthening “Made in America” and Protecting Ohio’s Steel Industry

Sen. Brown authored legislation to restore the requirement that military steel be 100 percent “Made in America,” and he was proud to announce a decision from the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) that restores a 35-year rule requiring that steel purchased by the U.S. military be 100 percent domestically produced. Several Ohio companies, including Cleveland’s ArcelorMittal and Cliffs Natural Resources and Marion’s Nucor, are involved in the process that leads to the production of armor plate. Sen. Brown emphasizes that Americans know how to make steel armor plate here in the United States, and there’s no reason why countries like China and Russia should be making the steel used in U.S. military vehicles and equipment. By implementing a rule consistent with Sen. Brown’s legislation, DoD stood up for the American steel industry, protecting both manufacturing jobs and national security

Advocating for Worker Pensions in a Cooper Tire Merger with Apollo Tyre

Early in the summer of 2013, Apollo Tyre announced it would merge with Cooper Tire, potentially making it the seventh largest tire company in the world. Cooper has been based in Findlay since 1914.

In July, Sen. Brown met with senior management leaders from Apollo Tyre to urge them to protect Ohio workers and jobs during the merger. Sen. Brown met with Apollo’s Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Onkar Kanwar, and its Chief Operating Officer (COO) Neeraj Kanwar.

In September, Sen. Brown wrote a letter urging Cooper Tire & Rubber Co. to prioritize and protect the pensions of its Ohio workers as it continued its merger with India’s Apollo Tyre. Sen. Brown raised serious concerns regarding the estimated debt that Cooper Tire would accumulate as a result of the merger, and his office met with Cooper Tire retirees worried about the health of their pensions.

Supporting Walmart’s Employees

This past holiday season, Sen. Brown joined other Members of Congress in expressing their support for Walmart workers who were calling for Walmart to end illegal retaliation against its

employees and to publicly commit to improving working conditions by providing workers with more full-time work and a living wage.

Sen. Brown joined with Sen. Ed Markey of Massachusetts, as well as Reps. Jan Schakowsky of Illinois, Judy Chu of California, William Lacy Clay of Missouri, Gwen Moore of Wisconsin, and Jim McDermott of Washington to issue the following statement:

“Across the country, there are countless Walmart workers who are paid poverty wages, cannot get enough hours, and have erratic work schedules that make it difficult to survive. Worse yet, as the National Labor Relations Board confirmed last week, Walmart has systematically and illegally retaliated against workers who have had the courage to stand up to improve working conditions.

Workers and their supporters held 1500 protests all over the nation. Pointing to the \$17 billion in annual profits and the \$144.7 billion wealth of the Walton family, the Black Friday protestors said Walmart can and should do more to improve jobs, and in turn, the economy.

“We stand with the courageous Walmart workers who are demanding better wages and an end to illegal retaliation. Walmart, the largest private employer in the United States, has a responsibility to their employees and our country to respect workers and their rights. No one should have to fear losing their jobs just for speaking up.



“With as many as 825,000 Walmart workers making less than \$25,000 a year and a single Walmart store costing taxpayers nearly \$1 million in public assistance, the need for change is clear. Taxpayers should not have to pick up the tab because Walmart refuses to pay workers a living wage.”

Helping Displaced Hostess Workers

More than 860 workers at Hostess Brands, Inc. throughout Ohio were notified in February that they were eligible to apply for worker adjustment assistance through the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Sen. Brown urged DOL to act swiftly to ensure financial support for these workers and their families.

Displaced workers involved in the supply of product cost and business development services were qualified to apply for assistance.

The Trade Adjustment Assistance program is a federal program that provides aid to workers who lose their jobs or whose work hours and wages are reduced as a result of increased imports. The program extends benefits including training for employment in another job or career, income support, job search allowances, and relocation allowances

Working to Keep Jobs at Janesville Acoustics

Sen. Brown urged Janesville Acoustics not to shutter its Norwalk manufacturing facility which would cost nearly 300 local workers their jobs following the company’s announcement that it

planned to close its Norwalk plant by the end of 2014 without the consultation of its workers, the city's elected officials, or Workers United Local 1422.

"We know how to make things in Ohio—especially cars—and the Norwalk workers are among the best at what they do," Sen. Brown said. "That is what makes it so disappointing that Janesville Acoustics decided to close its Norwalk facility without any effort to consult its workers or the local community. I urge Janesville Acoustics to look into every alternative that would help save the plant and the nearly 300 local jobs that depend on it. I offer whatever assistance I can to help this happen."

Janesville Acoustics serves the global automotive and transportation industry by providing thermal and acoustical products, services, and solutions. One in every eight jobs in Ohio is connected to the auto industry. One in every six cars produced in the United States is made in Ohio.

Ensuring Ohio Workers Have the Skills Necessary to Fill Open Jobs

In July, Sen. Brown heard from Daniel Brewer, a Navy veteran from Cincinnati who could not find a good paying job after returning from Afghanistan. Though Daniel had substantial training in the Navy, when he moved home to Ohio he had trouble translating his skills into the civilian workforce.

Daniel's experience is all too common. Time and time again Sen. Brown has heard similar stories throughout Ohio: biotech firms, high-tech manufacturers, and small businesses are hiring for open positions, but can't find the workers with the right skills to fill these job openings. With too many Ohioans still unable to find work, Sen. Brown believes we should be doing all that we can to ensure that our workers are qualified to fill Ohio jobs. According to Forbes, Ohio ranks 10th per capita in the nation among states expecting the biggest looming skilled labor shortage, due, in part, to an aging population and limited workforce training resources.

The skills gap exists – especially for careers in high-tech fields. This gap denies workers new opportunities they deserve and undermines our nation's economic competitiveness. It also limits Ohio's ability to attract new jobs and businesses.

In response to the stories Sen. Brown heard during his roundtables throughout Ohio about the need to close the skills gap, he first introduced the *Strengthening Employment Clusters to Organize Regional Success* (SECTORS) Act in 2008. And in July, Sen. Brown reintroduced it with Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME).

The *SECTORS Act* creates partnerships between educators, industry, and workforce training boards to ensure that workers have the right skills to get hired in high-tech, emerging industries with good-paying jobs. Sen. Brown believes we need to ensure that local workforce development efforts support the needs of local industries. The legislation would mean community colleges like Cincinnati State, Tri-C, Zane State, Sinclair State, and Rhodes State and workforce investment boards, industry, and labor, work together to serve local needs.

Agriculture & Rural Development

As Ohio's first senator to serve on the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry in more than forty years, Sen. Brown is honored to represent our state's farmers and rural communities.

With one in seven Ohio jobs connected to food and agriculture, Sen. Brown is fighting to keep Ohio agriculture strong. He is working for Ohio's family farmers by championing major reforms to the farm safety-net, new opportunities for direct marketing of local food, and better crop insurance policies.

Creating and Fighting to Pass a Comprehensive Farm Bill

With national attention tuned to the budget, debt, and deficit, the House and Senate Agriculture Committees once again began bipartisan, bicameral work towards a five-year Farm Bill that would save taxpayer dollars and make a fair contribution towards improving the nation's fiscal health.

After the House of Representatives was unable to join the Senate in passing a Farm Bill in 2012, the Senate Agriculture Committee once again began work on a bill that would reduce spending by \$24 billion over the next 10 years.

The Senate Agriculture Committee considered and passed out of committee the bipartisan *Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act of 2013* with a vote of 15-5 on May 9, 2013. Many amendments that Sen. Brown offered in 2012 were incorporated into the 2013 bill; during the committee markup, Sen. Brown successfully had other amendments accepted.



On June 10, 2013, after thorough deliberation, the Farm Bill passed the Senate by a bipartisan vote of 66-27. After months of inaction and delay by the House of Representatives, a companion Farm Bill was passed in September. Soon after, Sen. Brown's dedication was honored when he was named a member of the Farm Bill conference committee—a process where House and Senate negotiators work out the differences between competing bills. While work has been contentious, Sen. Brown has continually stated that he would be unable to support a bill that penalized Ohio corn and soybean farmers and hurt those reliant on food assistance resources during the economic downturn. Sen. Brown worked to pass a five-year bill that gives farmers and ag-related businesses the certainty they need to make planting and business decisions.

Advancing Agriculture and Opportunities for Farmers

In advance of the Farm Bill, Sen. Brown spent time gathering input from Ohio farmers and citizens of rural communities on his *Grown in Ohio* listening tour and translating Ohioans' voices into legislative proposals for the 2012 and 2013 Farm Bills. Making stops in Chesterland, Chillicothe, New Philadelphia, Custer, Cleveland, and Columbus, Sen. Brown met with farmers, entrepreneurs, and community leaders to discuss topics from energy development in Appalachia

and how to improve farmers' risk management tools to increasing production and consumption of locally grown food. Sen. Brown spent 2013 fighting to make Ohioans' priorities into policy and to pass that policy into law.

At *Grown in Ohio* listening sessions, Ohioans stressed to Sen. Brown the need to improve farm safety net programs so they are simple and efficient, providing farmers with support only when they need it most. Specifically, many Ohio farmers said that with volatile prices and rising input costs, a revenue-oriented system like the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program, which Sen. Brown crafted and successfully included in the 2008 Farm Bill, would be a better tool for managing that risk than the traditional suite of farm programs.

In response, Sen. Brown worked closely with Ohio farmers to develop a policy proposal that provides farmers with the risk management tools they need while maintaining participants' reliance on private crop insurance. The product of this collaboration was the Aggregate Risk and Revenue Management (ARRM) program that Sen. Brown introduced with Sen. John Thune.

Saving nearly \$20 billion in taxpayer dollars, ARRM eliminates three existing farm programs and overhauls the ACRE program to make it more simple, efficient, and responsive by determining losses more locally than at current state levels, reducing overlap with crop insurance, and improving the application and administrative processes. ARRM quickly became the foundation for Agriculture Committee discussions about the future of farm programs and, to date, remains the only concrete, bipartisan proposal for farm program reform with significant savings to taxpayers and support from farm and non-farm communities alike. In 2012, ARRM became the foundation for negotiations over what shape a streamlined farm safety net should take and was ultimately included in the Senate Farm Bill in modified form as the Ag Risk Coverage (ARC) program.

Under the ARC program, farmers are provided access to a single, risk-based coverage program that complements crop insurance to protect against both price and yield losses. Farmers will make a one-time choice between coverage at the individual farm level or at the county-level. Payments to farmers will be available only when actual losses are experienced off of a benchmark revenue calculated using an Olympic average of the previous five crop years. Payment rates depend on whether the farmer has elected the individual farm level coverage or county-level coverage. Farmers can only receive payments for acres that are actually planted, and only when there is a drop in price or yields. In order to be eligible for ARC, all farmers must agree to comply with conservation and wetlands requirements.

The Farm Bill that passed the Senate in June 2013 represents the most significant reform in agriculture policy in decades. Specifically, the bill includes:

Assisting Farmers with Disaster Assistance and Risk Management

At *Grown in Ohio* listening sessions, Ohio farmers repeatedly stressed the need for reliable crop insurance products that work for all types and sizes of farms. And, because Ohio farmers consistently stress that crop insurance is their most important risk mitigation tool, a long-standing priority of Sen. Brown is to make sure crop insurance is an affordable and good

investment for American farmers and taxpayers. These farmers told Sen. Brown that they didn't need or want direct payments.

Extreme weather events in 2012 underscored the critical need for the disaster assistance and risk management tools included in the Senate-passed *Agriculture, Reform, Food and Jobs Act of 2012*. With more than 80 percent of the country facing abnormally dry and drought conditions, farmers are faced with risks unlike those found in any other profession. A few days of bad weather or volatile market conditions can threaten the livelihood of America's farmers, ranchers, and rural small business owners. Responding to the concerns of farmers across America, the *Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act of 2013* strengthens and improves coverage for all commodities and underserved crops like fruit and vegetables without making budget cuts to the crop insurance title. It also strengthens and improves risk management tools and supports farmers and small business owners who have suffered disasters beyond their control.

Eliminating Direct Payments to Farmers

Direct payments and two other farm subsidy programs are repealed, creating \$15 billion in savings for deficit reduction. Direct payments are made to farmers regardless of losses or even if a crop is planted.

Ending Payments for Crops Farmers Aren't Growing

In the past, farmers received payments based on the crops growing on their land as far back as the 1980s, when historical base acres were determined. This bill will support farmers only when they suffer a substantial loss through events beyond their control and only for crops they have actually planted.

Ending Farm Payments to Non-Farmers

This bill closes the "management loophole" and ensures that benefits only go to actual farmers by tightening the United State Department of Agriculture's (USDA) definition of an actively engaged farmer.

Ending Farm Payments to Millionaires

Strict new limits prevent any person with an adjusted gross income of more than \$750,000 from receiving farm program payments.

Other provisions of the bill include:

- **Creating the Supplemental Coverage Option**
The Supplemental Coverage Option allows producers to purchase additional coverage on an area yield and loss basis. The coverage option establishes a trigger on coverage offered only if losses exceed 21 percent for producers enrolled in ARC and 10 percent for all others.
- **Expanding Crop Insurance for Fruit and Vegetable Producers**
Crop insurance coverage is expanded for underserved crops and regions, including fruit and vegetable producers. The bill provides additional assistance for underserved producers to partner with private developers of crop insurance to create improved insurance products. The bill also allows the Risk Management Agency (RMA) to conduct research and development

on new or improved crop insurance products. It also creates a new partnership to expand access of index- based weather insurance products for fruit and vegetable growers who don't have sufficient price or yield data for traditional insurance.

- **Improving Crop Insurance for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers**

Beginner farmers and ranchers are given a 10 percentage point discount for all crop insurance premiums. The bill also provides beginning farmers and ranchers with an improved production history when they have previous farming experience or when they face natural disasters.

- **Strengthening and Reinstating Livestock Disaster Programs for 2013**

The livestock disaster provisions originally enacted in the 2008 Farm Bill expired in 2011, leaving producers without disaster assistance for the current crop year. Livestock disaster programs are critical as farmers and ranchers experience losses in livestock and grazing land due to extreme heat, drought, and fire. The 2013 Farm Bill provides permanent funding and authority for the Livestock Disaster Programs, including: the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), the Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP), and the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), which was enhanced by increasing payment rates and streamlining assistance.

- **Supporting Specialty Crop Growers without Crop Insurance**

The 2013 Farm Bill will allow producers without access to crop insurance to purchase 65 percent "buy-up" coverage for losses under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). Producers who elect higher coverage levels would pay a nominal premium based on the value of their production and acres planted and could receive up to \$100,000 to cover their losses. Beginning farmers would receive a discount on fees paid for the new NAP buy-up coverage. This coverage is made retroactive for fruit producers who faced losses due to frosts and freezes in 2012.

- **Continuing the Tree Assistance Program**

The 2013 Farm Bill retroactively extends the Tree Assistance Program (TAP) for 2013 and provides it with permanent authority and funding going forward. TAP will be available to all producers who purchased either crop insurance or NAP and will pay producers the cost of replacing or rehabilitating fruit trees, grape vines, or fruit bushes that are lost to natural disasters.

Building New Markets for American Agriculture

Despite economic challenges nationwide, the farm economy has remained strong as U.S. production capacity continues to increase and agricultural exports are at record levels. Identifying new markets for American agricultural products and new revenue streams for farmers is essential to continuing this record of success. From renewable energy to export markets and local foods, Sen. Brown has been working to expand opportunities for all Ohio farmers.

Supporting Farm-Based Renewable Energy

With energy costs soaring, our country needs a bold and innovative approach to reducing our dependence on foreign oil and reducing pollution. Ohio farmers and rural communities are

integral to building, growing, and implementing the fuel technologies that will power the clean energy economy. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for farmers to diversify, secure new markets, and create new revenue streams.

Sen. Brown has been a consistent champion for the development of farm-based renewable energy and the Farm Bill energy programs created in the 2002 and 2007 Farm Bills have been important drivers of innovation and the adoption of new technologies. Sen. Brown put significant time and focus into building a bipartisan coalition of Agriculture Committee members who were committed to reauthorizing and funding key farm bill energy programs.

As the Farm Bill Committee process drew near, he worked with a coalition of 10 other Agriculture Committee Senators to write, fund, introduce, and pass the Conrad-Lugar energy amendment that will provide \$800 million over five years for most existing Farm Bill energy programs while making the programs more effective and efficient.

Developing a Bio-based Products Industry

The emerging bio-based industry links two of Ohio's strongest sectors, agriculture and manufacturing, to make new products such as soy-based greases, ink and toners, and plastic substitutes. Interest in the bio-based products industry gathered steam in 2011 when, at Sen. Brown's invitation, Denny Hall, the assistant director of the Ohio BioProducts Innovation Center (OBIC), and a sixth generation farmer testified before the Senate Agriculture Committee. Following this hearing, Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack visited the Ohio State University (OSU) to learn how the bio-based product industry is creating jobs. Sen. Brown also held a *Grown in Ohio* listening session focused on the challenges Ohio bio-based companies face as they get started and grow.

In 2012, Sen. Brown, Agriculture Committee Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow of Michigan and six of their colleagues introduced their "Grow it Here; Make it Here" Bio-based Manufacturing Initiative to help create jobs and boost the bio-based products industry.

Also in March, Sen. Brown and Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack visited Cleveland's Sherwin-Williams to highlight the new jobs and potential that could come from Ohio's manufacturing and agriculture industries.

Additional components of the bio-based initiative incorporated into the *Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act of 2013* include:

- **Strengthening the Biopreferred Program**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Biopreferred Program certifies and labels products so consumers can choose to purchase goods made of agriculture materials and provides a preference for these products for government purchases. The initiative also calls for greater accountability, including auditing and compliance activities to ensure the integrity of the certified label. USDA's Biopreferred Program offers over 8,900 bio-based products.

- **Spurring the commercialization of new agricultural innovations**
Streamlining and focusing resources will help new bio-based projects move from the development to the commercialization phase - sometimes referred to as "valley of death" for good ideas. The initiative focuses the USDA's Biomass Research and Development Initiative on the commercialization of bio-based products-bridging this gap to help accelerate the bio-based industry.
- **Increasing access to capital for bio-based manufacturers**
Expanding the USDA's Biorefinery Loan Guarantee Program will help bio-based manufacturers have access to loans to help finance new operations or expand existing ones.

Providing Outdoor Opportunities and Protecting Natural Resources

Our nation's land and water conservation programs provide state and local governments with the tools and resources to create parks and recreation areas and preserve these precious natural resources. Sen. Brown remains committed to preserving native wildlife and habitats and safeguarding our lands and waters for future generations.

The 2013 Farm Bill will strengthen efforts to protect critical wildlife habitats. Healthy habitats and clean, fishable waters are not only good for our environment, but they also support hunting, fishing, and bird watching that benefit rural economies and create jobs.

Such provisions include:

- **Ensuring Public Access to Private Lands**
The bill continues to encourage private landowners to allow public access to their land for recreational uses such as hunting, fishing and bird watching.
- **Putting Greater Focus on Wildlife Habitats**
The bill strengthens the Environmental Quality Incentives Program to increase support for wildlife habitats on working lands. At least five percent of the program's funding is directed to projects that support wildlife habitats, and wildlife considerations can be included in the application selection process.
- **Creating a Conservation Reserve Program that Continues to Support Habitat**
The Conservation Reserve Program is designed to prevent soil erosion and improve water quality. The bill establishes a new, 1.5-million acre grasslands enrollment option to encourage farmers to conserve critical grasslands. It also protects options for farmers and foresters to develop wildlife habitats on their land.
- **Protecting Locally Identified Resources**
The bill increases flexibility for wildlife habitat priorities to be included in the Conservation Stewardship Program, creating additional opportunities for conservation activities that benefit wildlife species.

- **Fighting for Threatened Lands**

The bill creates an easement program with mandatory funding to protect wetlands as well as farmlands or grasslands that are threatened by suburban sprawl. The bill protects access to wetland easements for hunting, fishing, and other outdoor activities.

- **Connecting Farmers with Conservation Organizations**

The bill significantly expands opportunities for conservation organizations and local communities to partner with farmers to maintain watersheds and wildlife habitats. Specifically, four existing programs are consolidated into one that will support projects that improve soil quality, water quality, or wildlife habitat in a specific area or region. Projects are selected through a competitive, merit-based process, and producers are encouraged to leverage partner resources to achieve common goals. In Ohio, this program will prove important for leveraging resources and continued support for water-quality improvement efforts on Lake Erie and Grand Lake Saint Marys.

Preserving the Great Ohio Landscape

Saving the integrity of unused, native soils is an important step in the preservation of the Ohio landscape and grasslands that serve as prime wildlife habitats and support healthier wildlife populations.

Sen. Brown's bipartisan agriculture safety net proposal (ARRM) also included an important proposal, "Sod saver" that would save native sod. These rules would make land previously not used for crop production ineligible for commodity support programs—encouraging farmers to not put this native soil into production. The bill includes a similar nationwide provision to encourage farmers to protect critical grassland and prairie habitats and not convert that land to agricultural production.

Improving Water Quality in Lake Erie

A clean and healthy Lake Erie benefits all Ohioans. Recent studies have shown that greater investment in the Great Lakes would have a benefit of over \$50 billion for the economies of the eight Great Lakes states. However, the Western Lake Erie Basin has been experiencing growing algal blooms that threaten both its ecological and economic vitality. That is why, in 2011, Sen. Brown wrote to Chief Dave White of USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service calling for increased attention to conservation efforts in the surrounding watersheds and inviting the Chief to visit the lake and see firsthand the challenges facing this critical watershed.

In December 2011, Chief White did just that and brought with him a team of the nation's top scientists from USDA and Purdue University to learn from the Ohioans who are working on Lake Erie every day. The scientists then developed a set of recommended measures farmers can take to help limit phosphorus losses from agricultural operations that the USDA is now implementing in Ohio and throughout the region.

As a result of Chief White's visit and the scientists' recommendations, in June 2012, Sen. Brown, along with Secretary Vilsack and Agriculture Committee Chairwoman Stabenow, announced \$2 million in financial assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives

Program (EQIP) to help farmers in designated parts of Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana prevent phosphorus from entering Western Lake Erie Basin waterways.

The announcement builds on the larger Great Lakes Restoration Initiative that was established between 11 federal agencies in 2010 to address critical resource concerns, including nutrient flows into the lake. Sen. Brown is an ardent supporter of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and is working to ensure it continues beyond 2012.

Cleaning up Grand Lake Saint Marys

For several years, a toxic, blue-green algae has been growing in the waters of Grand Lake St. Marys leaving the lake unsafe for swimming. This problem has contributed to a decline in regional tourism and has led to increased economic hardship for local businesses. Sen. Brown has worked to secure support for conservation efforts focused on water quality for the Grand Lake St. Marys region and related efforts that encourage continued work to improve the health of the lake.

Sen. Brown has supported locally-led efforts to slow the growth of algae and to reduce the flow of nutrients into the lake. In March, Sen. Brown announced the award of \$1 million in dedicated Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funding through the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service to be used to help farmers in the watershed finance and adopt new practices—such as better manure storage facilities and edge-of-field monitoring—that will contribute to improving the long-term health of the lake.

Grand Lake St. Marys has been an economic anchor of Mercer and Auglaize counties and Sen. Brown remains committed to pursuing all possible solutions to restore it.

Bolstering Production and Consumption of Ohio-Grown Foods

Local and regional agriculture is a major economic driver in the rural economy. There are now more than 7,000 farmers' markets and direct to consumer sales have accounted for more than \$1.2 billion in annual revenues nationwide. By supporting our state's family farms, we can expand farming businesses, create rural jobs, and invest in local and regional food economies.

For each dollar that consumers spend on food, less than 16 cents goes back to the farmer. Supporting opportunities for farmers to sell their products directly to consumers or through shorter local supply chains means that more of a consumer's dollar stays in Ohio— primarily on the farm, where it is invested in local jobs and supplies that benefit the local economy. A recent study shows that if northeast Ohio's residents and businesses spent 25 percent of their food dollars on local farms and businesses, 27,500 new jobs could be created while increasing economic output by \$4.2 billion and generating \$126 million in local and state taxes.

That is why Sen. Brown introduced, the *Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act*. This legislation, designed to be a part of the Farm Bill, is a comprehensive package of reforms that would help Ohio farmers and ranchers by addressing production, aggregation, marketing and distribution needs. The bill would also prioritize consumer access to healthy, fresh food with support for technology and direct sales.

Because Ohioans have expressed a keen interest in Ohio-grown food and growing regional food systems, Sen. Brown hosted an all-day *Grown in Ohio: Making the Local Food Connection* conference with the USDA and The Ohio State University Extension in Columbus, announcing that Ohio has signed the first cooperative agreement with the Food Safety Inspection Service that will allow state-inspected meat to be shipped across state lines.

Key provisions of the *Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act* were included in the *Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act of 2013*. The bill also:

- **Expands Opportunities for Local and Regional Food Systems**
The bill strengthens support for farmers' markets and expands authority to support innovative local food enterprises like food hubs. The bill also supports local food projects like urban greenhouses, community gardens, and community-based nutrition education for low-income families that help address community food security and support local economies.
- **Increases Access and Affordability of Healthy Food Options**
In both urban and rural low-income communities, many people lack reasonable access to nutritious and affordable food. The bill authorizes the Healthy Food Financing Initiative to administer loans and grants to improve access to healthy foods in these "food deserts." The bill also expands access to healthy options with initiatives that give low-income individuals incentives for purchasing fresh fruits and vegetables and by allowing Community Supported Agriculture operations to be authorized to accept Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program vouchers.
- **Promotes Better Health for School Children**
The bill continues the successful Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Program, which provides fresh fruits and vegetables to elementary school children throughout the school day in school districts with a high proportion of low-income students. It also continues the Department of Defense Fresh Program, which distributes fruits and vegetables to schools and service institutions and continues to allow the Agriculture Marketing Service to conduct pilots to allow states to source locally grown produce.

Creating Opportunities for Beginning Farmers

With the average age of farmers at 57, one of the most pressing challenges in agriculture is preparing the next generation of farmers and ranchers to meet the increasing demand for food. Making sure agriculture is profitable is an essential component of recruiting and retaining a new generation of farmers and ranchers.

Because Sen. Brown puts high priority on helping Ohioans continue, start, and build family farming operations, he cosponsored, the *Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act*. The legislation extends, improves, and strengthens USDA's ability to help farmers obtain education and training, necessary financial resources and credit, assistance for practicing sound conservation in their operations, and adequate income insurance and risk management. The *Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act* includes several key provisions from the *Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act*.

Additionally, Sen. Brown offered an amendment during full Senate consideration of the Farm Bill to provide an additional \$50 million in resources for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, bringing the total funding level for the program to \$80 million over five years.

In order to advance the interests of beginning farmers, the Senate's Farm Bill:

- **Prioritizes Beginning Farmers across USDA Programs**
The Department of Agriculture is required to prioritize beginning farmers to ensure that they have access to USDA programs, including the Biomass Crop Assistance Program and Rural Cooperation Development Grants. Five percent set-asides in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) make sure that beginning farmers and ranchers have fair and equitable access to conservation programs.
- **Increases Access to Capital**
The bill makes significant strides in increasing lending to beginning farmers by expanding eligibility, removing term limits on guaranteed lending, and providing opportunities for beginning farmers to earn direct loan access. For the first time, the USDA will have the ability to create pilot programs in the Farm Loan Programs exclusively targeted to beginning farmers. This provision is based on a bipartisan bill to eliminate term limits on Farm Service Agency loan programs that Sen. Brown cosponsored in February 2011.
- **Provides Better Access to Crop Insurance**
This bill provides nearly \$200 million in new resources for expanded access for crop insurance for beginning farmers. These improvements will lower the cost of crop insurance for beginning farmers, permit the Risk Management Agency to consider a beginning farmer's previous experience in calculating their production history, and provide additional assistance when beginning farmers face natural disasters.
- **Encourages Older Farmers to Help Beginning Farmers Through Conservation**
The bill reauthorizes the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Transition Incentive Program, which gives two extra years of CRP payments to retiring farmers who transition their expiring CRP land to beginning farmers. This program has seen great success with retiring farmers who want to help the next generation get started in agriculture.
- **Helps Beginning Farmers Buy Land**
The bill reauthorizes the Contract Land Sales Program, which guarantees loans to retiring farmers who sell their land to beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers. The bill also sets aside a significant percentage of loans for beginning farmers, including additional benefits in the down payment loan program, conservation loans, and direct lending programs for farm ownership and operations.

- **Helps Beginning Farmers Get Started**

The bill continues the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Individual Development Accounts, which are designed to help new farmers finance their agricultural pursuits. This program funds financial and business education, as well as matched saving accounts, and encourages healthy business practices and savings.

Supporting Agricultural Research

Modern agriculture is faced with many challenges. By 2050, agricultural production must double in order to feed the global population. Investment in agricultural research has been the foundation for our country's rich agricultural success and must remain a priority.

Sen. Brown has supported the *Charitable Agricultural Research Act* that creates agricultural research organizations to facilitate private sector contributions to agricultural research and was included in the *Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act of 2013*. He also cosponsored the bipartisan bill, the *Veterinary Services Improvement Act*, which was included in the Senate Farm Bill, to address the shortage of veterinarians in rural agricultural areas by supporting veterinary education and rural recruitment. Additional provisions supporting agricultural research in the bill include:

- **Supporting the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research**

The bill creates a new non-profit foundation, the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research, to leverage private funding, matched with federal dollars, to support agricultural research. This innovative approach will foster continued innovation in agricultural research.

- **Continuing Critical Agricultural Research**

The Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) program provides competitive grants for basic and applied research. The bill does not include policy changes but does reauthorize the program enabling all Ohio universities and faculty to compete for resources to research issues of relevance to the communities they serve.

The bill reauthorizes agricultural research activities at 1862, 1890 and 1994 Land Grant institutions. In Ohio, this means that agricultural, food, nutrition, and natural resources research will continue at the Ohio State University and its satellite campuses at the Ohio Agriculture Research and Development Center (OARDC) and the South Centers in Piketon.

- **Continuing Extension Service**

The bill reauthorizes resources for extension service activities. Each state has an extension service run through the Land Grant University; in Ohio, this is the Ohio State University. OSU-Extension has staff in every county of Ohio, where they provide technical support and expertise on issues ranging from consumer science and nutrition to agronomy and pest control.

- **Funding Specialty Crop Research**

The bill provides mandatory funding over 10 years for the Specialty Crop Research Initiative, ensuring funding will be available for key research projects for fruits, vegetables, and other specialty crops. This funding also ensures funding will be available for this program in the next Farm Bill.

Building Strong, Vibrant Rural Communities

Strong rural communities are essential to Ohio's economic prosperity and serve as a barometer for our economy's health. By closing the skills gap, rebuilding our infrastructure, and expanding agriculture's role in the clean energy economy, we can strengthen rural Ohio's competitiveness in the 21st century. That's why Sen. Brown remains committed to doing whatever it takes to build strong, vibrant towns and rural communities in Ohio. In recognition of his leadership, Sen. Brown was named "Rural Champion of the Year" by a leading national rural organization, the Rural Community Assistance Partnership.

Creating Jobs and Economic Prosperity in Rural Ohio and the 2013 Farm Bill

More than half of Ohio's 88 counties are designated as "rural" by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Sen. Brown recognizes that rural America faces great challenges in a fragile economy. That's why Sen. Brown is working in agriculture, clean energy, aerospace, manufacturing, entrepreneurship and more to connect Ohio's strengths, rebalance the economy, replace the hundreds of thousands of Ohio jobs that have been lost, and rebuild our middle class.

Today, one out of every 12 jobs in the American economy is connected in some way to what happens in rural America, and Sen. Brown is fighting to make sure that job opportunities in rural America increase. In 2013, much of Sen. Brown's attention has turned to how the Farm Bill can be a mobilizing force for investment and job creation in rural communities.

As the lead federal agency for rural economic development, how the USDA approaches its work in rural America matters. And, while most rural development programs are funded via the annual appropriations processes, it was during the Farm Bill negotiations that Congress had the chance to re-evaluate and fine-tune USDA's day-to-day work in rural America.

Sen. Brown worked closely with Chairwoman Stabenow and Ranking Member Roberts to rewrite and reform USDA Rural Development programs. In most farm bills, rural development programs are simply reauthorized with a few tweaks here and there. Sen. Brown used the 2013 Farm Bill as an opportunity to simplify the more than 44 different USDA Rural Development programs into a handful of programs with a clear purpose.

A summary of the rural economic development provisions of the *Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act of 2013* is detailed below (starred items were funded by Sen. Brown's Amendment to Strengthen Rural Communities and Foster the Next Generation of Farmers and Ranchers).

Rural Business Development

- **Continuing Support for Rural Business Development**
The Rural Business Development Grants program awards competitive grants to public agencies and non-profit community development organizations for business development, planning, technical assistance, or job training in rural areas.
- **Supporting Rural Cooperative Development**
The Rural Cooperative Development Grants program provides competitive grants to non-profit organizations for the establishment and operation of centers for rural cooperative development.
- **Encouraging Rural Entrepreneurship ***
The Rural Microenterprise Assistance Program awards grants to microenterprise development organizations to provide training, business planning assistance, market development assistance, and other services to rural microenterprises. This program also awards funding for the establishment of rural microloan programs designed to support microentrepreneurs in rural areas.
- **Supporting Rural Food Processing***
The Value-Added Agricultural Market Development Program Grants program is designed to encourage independent producers of agricultural commodities to process their raw products into marketable goods, thereby increasing farm income. Grants may be used for planning activities, for working capital for marketing value-added agricultural products, and for farm-based renewable energy. The program will prioritize funding for projects benefiting beginning farmers and ranchers. Sen. Brown's Amendment successfully provided five years of mandatory funding for this program in the farm bill.

Infrastructure Improvement

- **Providing Access to Broadband Services in Rural Areas**
Sen. Brown knows that in order for rural America to compete in the global economy and offer the quality of life necessary to attract and retain residents and businesses, expansion of broadband service is essential. That's why, in April 2012 he introduced the *Connecting Rural America Act*. The bill reauthorizes and modernizes the USDA's Broadband Loan Program through 2017 while helping it to better serve communities that are small in size, remotely located, high poverty, and projects that are supported by a combination of local stakeholders. The bill was included in the 2013 Farm Bill.

Through USDA's Broadband Program, the Department provides funds for the construction, improvement, and acquisition of facilities and equipment needed to provide broadband service in rural communities. The Farm Bill included Sen. Brown's *Connect America Act* which authorizes USDA to begin providing combinations of grants and loans for the expansion of broadband service. The program will target funds to rural communities isolated from significant population centers.

- **Advancing Distance Learning and Telemedicine**
This program provides competitive grant and loan funding that supports equipment and infrastructure improvements to enhance telecommunications capabilities at educational and medical facilities.
- **Funding Water, Waste Disposal and Wastewater Facilities ***
This program provides grants, loans, and loan guarantees to public agencies for projects that support the development, storage, treatment, purification, or distribution of water or the collection, treatment, or disposal of waste in rural areas. Rural communities with populations of less than 5,500 are prioritized for funding.
- **Improving Rural Water and Wastewater Systems**
The Rural Water and Wastewater Circuit Rider Program provides competitive grants to non-profit organizations that give technical assistance to rural public water systems. This technical assistance helps the water systems to comply with state and federal environmental regulations. The program is authorized to receive \$25 million annually.
- **Continuing Business Loan Support**
The Business and Industry Direct and Guaranteed Loan Program improves, develops, or finances business, industry, and employment in rural communities by bolstering the existing private credit structure through the guarantee of quality loans. The bill reserves funds made available through the program for projects that include the processing, distribution, storage, and marketing of locally produced agricultural food products.
- **Creating a Rural Energy Savings Program**
The bill authorizes a new loan program, administered by the Department of Agriculture, that will issue zero-interest loans to any electric cooperative or coordinated group of electric cooperatives for the purpose of lending the funds to their customers to make energy savings retrofit and structural improvements.

Community Development

- **Increasing Strategic Economic and Community Development**
The bill authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to give priority to applications submitted for funds through Rural Development programs that support regional approaches to community and economic development. These applications should reflect the participation of multiple stakeholders in the service area of the proposal. The applications should also have clear objectives and an explanation of performance measures that will be used to determine progress in meeting those objectives.
- **Providing Technical Assistance for Community Facilities Projects**
The bill authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to make up to three percent of funds provided through the Community Facilities Loan and Grant Program available to applicants for technical assistance. Many rural communities do not have full-time staff to assist in the preparation of funding applications. This provision will help smaller communities in the development of their applications to the Community Facilities program, which supports projects related to economic development, public safety, and health care delivery.

While Sen. Brown strongly supported the final product of the Agriculture Committee's work to improve the rural development provisions of the *Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act of 2013*, he was deeply disappointed that no mandatory funding was allotted for these important programs. Since 1996, Congress has provided an average of \$413 million per Farm Bill for the Rural Development title, while the new bill, as reported by the Committee, included no funding at all.

Determined to ensure the final version of the Farm Bill that passed the Senate included funding for key rural development programs, Sen. Brown wrote and worked to garner support for an amendment to do just that.

Sen. Brown's amendment garnered the support of more than 185 organizations including: National Association of Counties, National Association of Development Organizations, Farmers Union, Farmers Market Coalition, National Rural Water Association, National Young Farmers Association, Association of Towns and Townships, National Association of Resource Conservation & Development Councils, National League of Cities, National Rural Housing Coalition, Rural Community Assistance Partnership, National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, Center for Rural Affairs, American Public Works Association, and League of Rural Voters.

The amendment was considered by the full Senate and passed on a vote of 55-44. The information, below, summarizes Sen. Brown's amendment:

- **Value-Added Producer Grant Program (VAPG)**
The VAPG provides working capital and business development funds for on-farm and local processing and retail agriculture. Sen. Brown's amendment provides \$50 million in funding to VAPG. The 2008 Farm Bill provided \$15 million in mandatory funding along with an authorization for an additional \$40 million in annual discretionary funding. The bill passed by the Senate Agriculture Committee did not fund the VAPG program.
- **Rural Micro-entrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP)**
RMAP provides financial assistance to businesses with fewer than 10 full-time employees to support the development of entrepreneurial activities in rural areas. The program requires a 15 percent match and is targeted towards those who could compete in the private sector but lack access to credit and have limited equity capital options. Sen. Brown's amendment provides \$15 million in funding to RMAP, which was created in the 2008 Farm Bill and authorized a total of \$15 million in mandatory funding. The bill passed by the Senate Agriculture Committee did not fund RMAP.
- **Water/Wastewater Backlog**
Sen. Brown's amendment provides technical and financial assistance for water and wastewater infrastructure upgrades in small towns and communities in rural areas. It provides \$50 million in funding to reduce the backlog. The 2008 Farm Bill provided \$120 million in mandatory funding. The bill passed by the Senate Agriculture Committee did not provide any funding for the water and wastewater backlog.

- **Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP)**
BFRDP provides competitively awarded funding through the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) for education, extension, outreach, and technical assistance initiatives directed at helping beginning farmers and ranchers of all types. Sen. Brown's amendment provides an additional \$35 million.

Education

Access to affordable, quality education is critical to the economic vitality of our nation. To help prepare Americans for success in college and careers, Sen. Brown has consistently advocated for job training programs for high-demand fields and affordable post-secondary options for all qualified individuals.

Making College More Affordable

College costs continue to climb at a rate surpassing inflation, even as the need for post-secondary education is increasingly important for an individual's financial stability and our nation's economic health. However, because of legislation that passed as part of the *College Cost Reduction and Access Act of 2007*, interest rates for subsidized Stafford loans for undergraduate students were capped at 3.4 percent.



To address this pressing issue, Sen. Brown fought to keep student loan interest rates for borrowers affordable. Sen. Brown led the fight to include interest rate caps in the bipartisan *Student Loan Certainty Act of 2013* in order to prevent high student loan interest rates and keep interest rates predictable for future borrowers. Through the advocacy of Sen. Brown and his colleagues, this legislation included important protections for student borrowers.

Addressing Private Student Loan Debt

Prior to the 2008 economic collapse, the private student loan market grew at a rapid rate. During the 2007-2008 academic year, 14 percent of undergraduates used private student loans—an increase from just five percent in 2003 and 2004. Private student loans are the riskiest way to pay for college. Often, these loans come with variable interest rates ranging from five percent to nearly 20 percent with no limit on origination and other fees. The reason for such a drastic increase in lending can be attributed to multiple factors including the growing cost of college and stagnant aggregate federal loan limits, easily available credit for young borrowers, and predatory lending practices by student loan lenders.

According to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), borrowers are now burdened with nearly \$165 billion in private student loan debt with limited relief options. Unlike federal loans, private student loans do not come with flexible repayment rates or loan forgiveness options. Additionally, unlike other private debt, private student loans are not dischargeable in bankruptcy.

To help make college more affordable for middle-class and low-income families, Sen. Brown, who chairs the Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protections, authored legislation that would help Americans saddled with costly, private student loans refinance to more affordable options. This legislation coincided with the CFPB's release of a report on the private student loan market and would put many of CFPB's recommendations into law.

Sen. Brown also played a crucial role in the establishment of the position of Student Loan Ombudsman, which passed as part of the *Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act*. The CFPB's Student Loan Ombudsman provides private student loan borrowers with a central location to make complaints about their private student loans.

Convening the Sixth Annual College Presidents Conference

In April, Sen. Brown hosted the sixth Ohio College Presidents' Conference, an annual gathering of Ohio's college and university presidents in Washington D.C., to discuss common goals and challenges facing Ohio's academic institutions.

The conference agenda was developed with the assistance of the conference host committee, a group of ten college presidents from across the state. With Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric Shinseki as the keynote speaker, the conference addressed ensuring success for student veterans.



Other featured speakers included Sens. Tom Harkin and Lamar Alexander, Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, who discussed their higher education agenda. The conference also included Sen. Rob Portman, representatives of the Ohio House Delegation, a representative from the Department of Education, and member of the White House Domestic Policy Council.

Rebuilding Ohio's Schools

Sen. Brown believes that Ohio's schools equip our future generation of leaders with the skills they need to succeed and that Ohio's students deserve to attend school in buildings that are safe and up-to-date. That's why he and Sen. Jay Rockefeller of West Virginia introduced the *Rebuilding America's Schools Act*, which would strengthen and expand school construction bond programs.

"We have a responsibility to create the best environment for learning possible. That includes assuring that Ohio's students are able to attend school in buildings that are up-to-date," said Sen. Brown. "Evidence shows that this benefits students by creating an environment more conducive to learning so that they can grow and prosper. That is why I am proud to introduce with Sen. Rockefeller the *Rebuilding America's Schools Act*."

Energy & Environment

Ohio's Clean Energy Economy

Sen. Brown has led the fight for our nation's energy policy to focus on decreasing American dependence on foreign oil, increasing energy efficiency, and creating good-paying manufacturing jobs in Ohio. He has long recognized that a smart energy policy is also a smart jobs policy that can help to make Ohio a leader not only in traditional fuel sources, including natural gas and coal, but also in clean energy technology like wind, solar, and biomass. From the recently opened 300 megawatt, 156 turbine Blue Creek wind farm in Van Wert and Paulding Counties, to the potential of new shale plays in Southeastern Ohio, Sen. Brown has long supported a responsible 'all of the above' approach to help solve our nation's energy challenges.

Promoting Clean Energy Manufacturing

While Ohio is a national leader in clean energy manufacturing, about 70 percent of the components of clean energy systems are built outside of the United States. Sen. Brown believes that we must not trade our dependence on foreign oil for a dependence on foreign-manufactured clean energy sources. As clean energy becomes one of the world's largest industries, manufacturing provides a significant opportunity for the U.S. to restore its industrial base and create good-paying American jobs.

That's why Sen. Brown has advocated for the expansion of tax credits for manufacturers who are seeking to create new products by creating equipment used for clean energy production in the U.S. In December, Sen. Brown participated in an event to highlight the need to continue to support efforts in clean technology manufacturing. This high-growth sector could benefit Ohio companies even during economic downturn.

Cleaning up the American Centrifuge Plant in Piketon

Sen. Brown urged President Obama to commit \$450 million to continue to ramp up cleanup work in Piketon. In his letter, Sen. Brown urged that Department of Energy funds be committed to help spur economic growth in Portsmouth and Southern Ohio. Sen. Brown also sent a letter to Will Henderson, Chair of Portsmouth Site Specific Advisory Board pressing for continued leadership in regard to the cleanup and re-use of the Portsmouth site.

During a meeting with nominee for Secretary of the Department of Energy, Dr. Moniz, Sen. Brown pressed for support in advancing the American Centrifuge Plant in Piketon. This would help create 4,000 jobs in Southern Ohio and is critical for both economic development and national security.

Supporting Offshore Wind Energy in Lake Erie

Ohio is also home to several wind projects and Lake Erie has the potential to house the United States' first freshwater, offshore wind project. Wind energy not only generates clean, renewable energy but also creates jobs. Offshore wind energy has the potential to bring thousands of manufacturing jobs to Ohio and clean energy to millions of homes near Lake Erie.

Sen. Brown continues to work closely with wind experts, developers, and universities in northern Ohio to help coordinate offshore wind research and development and to help implement efforts to build the first freshwater wind farm in Lake Erie. Sen. Brown led a delegation letter to then Secretary of Energy Chu that resulted in the project being awarded \$4 million to continue development and engineering work.

Sen. Brown also cosponsored bipartisan legislation that would provide critical financial incentives for the investment and production of offshore wind energy. The *Incentivizing Offshore Wind Power Act* would provide the offshore wind industry with enhanced stability through an investment tax credit for the first 3,000 megawatts (MW) installed. These provisions are vital because of the long lead times required to permit and construct offshore wind turbines, compared to onshore wind energy. The legislation followed Sen. Brown's December 2012 announcement that the Lake Erie Energy Development Corporation (LEEDCo) was awarded new federal funds to advance a first-of-its-kind offshore wind development in Lake Erie.

Recognizing the longer start-up time for offshore wind compared to onshore wind, the *Incentivizing Offshore Wind Power Act* would amend Section 48 of the Tax Code by creating an investment offshore wind tax credit for the first 3,000 MW offshore wind facilities placed into service. The legislation would:

- Require the Secretary of Treasury to consult with the Secretaries of Energy and Interior when establishing the credit.
- Provide a 30 percent tax credit on the investment in offshore wind for the first 3,000 MW generated.
- Give the Department of the Treasury the authority to make the final decision on who is awarded the tax credit. Once a credit is awarded, companies would have five years to install the wind facility.
- Prohibit companies from receiving other production or investment tax credits in addition to the offshore wind investment tax credit created under the bill.
- Define 'offshore facility' as any facility located in the inland navigable waters of the United States, including the Great Lakes, or in the coastal waters of the United States, including the territorial seas of the United States, the exclusive economic zone of United States, and the outer Continental Shelf of the United States.

Energy Efficiency in Ohio

During consideration of the *Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act*, Sen. Brown introduced a bipartisan amendment to improve the efficiency of water systems in federal buildings. This amendment had the support of industry and labor groups and would ensure cost-effective, energy efficient solutions to meet the water needs of the Government Services Administration.

Creating Natural Gas Jobs in Ohio

Sen. Brown believes that natural gas deposits in the Marcellus and Utica shale sites have the potential to create jobs in Eastern Ohio, boost Ohio's steel and chemical industry, and provide a cleaner burning fuel source. He believes that new jobs in this industry should be going to Ohioans—not workers brought in from out-of-state, and that drilling companies should be using materials and supplies made and constructed by Ohio manufacturers. Building on previous job fairs that he has hosted, in March, Sen. Brown, along with the local chambers of commerce from 10 Eastern Ohio counties, held a job fair in Cambridge that was attended by more than 50 companies. The event was a success and helped connect job seekers with companies operating in the oil and gas industry.

Sen. Brown continues to work to ensure that our air and water is protected, that the industry is following stringent standards that protect the environment for current and future generations, and that property owners leasing their land are getting a fair deal from oil and gas companies. Sen. Brown believes that empowering local communities to make decisions on this critical issue is important and has expressed his concern about injection wells for disposal of wastewater from the hydrofracking process that has been linked to earthquakes in the Mahoning Valley.

Protecting Lake Erie

Sen. Brown believes that Lake Erie is one of Ohio's most valuable resources and is dedicated to protecting it. He is an original cosponsor of a number of bills that would improve water quality, promote economic development, and stop the spread of invasive species that harm the Great Lakes.

Preserving the Great Lakes and Bolstering Local Economies

In June, Sen. Brown announced that he would cosponsor the *Great Lakes Ecological and Economic Protection Act of 2013* (GLEEPA), bipartisan legislation aimed at preserving the Great Lakes and bolstering economic growth throughout the Great Lakes region. The legislation, introduced by Sens. Carl Levin of Michigan and Mark Kirk of Illinois, is intended to protect the Great Lakes and the millions of jobs they support from a variety of ecological threats and invasive species.

“Protecting Lake Erie is about protecting Ohio's drinking water and the thousands of fishing, boating, and recreation jobs that are dependent on clean and safe waters,” Sen. Brown said. “The *Great Lakes Ecological and Economic Protection Act of 2013* is a bipartisan effort to ensure that the Great Lakes, including Lake Erie, are preserved for future generations to enjoy.”



The *Great Lakes Ecological and Economic Protection Act of 2013* would:

- Authorize the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) and direct the implementation of recommendations presented in the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy of 2005 and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Action Plan.

- Reauthorize the Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO) for handling Great Lakes matters, including the GLRI, Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA), the Great Lakes Legacy Program, Remedial Action Plans for Areas of Concern, and Lakewide Management Plans.
- Reauthorize the *Great Lakes Legacy Act*, which was first authorized in 2002 and has been extremely successful at removing contaminated sediment from the U.S. Areas of Concern (AOC).
- Authorize the Federal Interagency Task Force (IATF), which brings together eleven U.S. Cabinet and federal agency heads to coordinate restoration of the Great Lakes amongst the different agencies.
- Authorize the Great Lakes Advisory Board (GLAB), which will provide advice and recommendations to the EPA Administrator, as Chair of the Great Lakes Interagency Task Force, on matters pertaining to Great Lakes restoration and protection.

Connecting Businesses with Conservation Resources

The Senate passed legislation in May to connect businesses and communities throughout Ohio with critical resources for maintenance, inspections, and upgrades to water infrastructure projects. *The Water Resources Development Act* (WRDA) also includes three bipartisan amendments introduced by Sen. Brown that would help slow the spread of Asian carp in the Ohio and Upper Mississippi River Basins, expedite projects like the Blanchard River Flood Mitigation Project (BRFRP), and utilize American-made steel and iron in water infrastructure projects.

Improving Water Quality and Reducing Algal Blooms in Lake Erie

A clean and healthy Lake Erie benefits all Ohioans. Recent studies have shown that increased investment in the Great Lakes would have a benefit of more than \$50 billion on the economies of the eight Great Lakes states. However, the Western Lake Erie Basin has been experiencing growing algal blooms that pose a threat to Ohio's economy and Ohioans' ability to enjoy the lake. That is why Sen. Brown has been working with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service to address the challenges facing this critical watershed.

Great Lake Restoration Initiative

Sen. Brown has been a leading champion of restoring Lake Erie to full health and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). GLRI creates a dedicated fund for ecosystem restoration, improvements to water quality, and wildlife and fish restoration in the Great Lakes. Since its inception in 2009, more than \$20 million in funding is at work in cleaning up Lake Erie, restoring ecosystems and improving fisheries in the watershed, promoting cleaner water, and keeping invasive species out of Lake Erie. In August, Sen. Brown saw firsthand the benefits of the GLRI when he visited the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge along the shores of Lake Erie.

Stopping the Invasion of Asian Carp

Sen. Brown has long been concerned with the possible spread of Asian carp into the Great Lakes. Asian carp are an invasive species that would threaten the ecosystem of Lake Erie. Researchers

have found that in many sections of the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers, Asian carp are the only species present. More than 185 species of invasive fish, mussels, and plants from Asia and Eastern Europe are already in the Great Lakes system, choking out native species. Sen. Brown has continued to hammer the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to better focus its efforts to keep Asian carp out of the Great Lakes ecosystem via hydrological separation of the Mississippi and Great Lakes watersheds. He also believes that efforts must be undertaken to eliminate any possible pathways between the Ohio River and Lake Erie watersheds that could result in the migration of the invasive species.

Sen. Brown also had a bipartisan amendment unanimously approved by the Senate that would require the USACE to further study the spread of Asian carp up the Ohio River and its tributaries.

Financial Services and Consumer Protection

Holding Wall Street Accountable

Ending Too Big to Fail

In January 2013, Sen. Brown, joined by his Republican Banking Committee colleague Sen. David Vitter of Louisiana, initiated a study by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) concerning the financial benefits that the largest Wall Street banks enjoy as a result of their “Too Big to Fail” status. The GAO released the first part of its study in November, finding that the federal government’s assistance in 2008 benefitted the largest banks and allowed them to borrow at below-market rates.

In March, Sens. Brown and Vitter won unanimous approval for an amendment to the Senate budget to end federal subsidies for too-big-to-fail mega-banks. The amendment, which passed 99-0, will end federal subsidies and funding advantages for megabanks larger than \$500 billion. *Bloomberg* estimates that the largest banks borrow at lower costs than other institutions based upon their “Too Big to Fail” status. According to Bloomberg’s calculations, JPMorgan, Bank of America, Citi, Wells Fargo, and Goldman Sachs account for \$64 billion of the total subsidy “an amount roughly equal to their annual profits.” Bloomberg’s analysis shows that the five biggest U.S. banks would be “barely profitable” if they were not able to borrow at artificially cheap rates because the market believes they are “Too Big to Fail.”

In April, Sens. Brown and Vitter introduced the *Terminating Bailouts for Taxpayer Fairness (TBTF) Act*, legislation to prevent any one financial institution from becoming so large and overleveraged that it could put our economy on the brink of collapse or trigger the need for a federal bailout. Their legislation would set reasonable capital standards for the largest banks to pay for the cost of their own failure. It would narrow the government’s “safety net” of financial support to traditional banks and provide regulatory relief so that community banks can compete with megabanks on a level playing field. Their legislation is supported by the Independent Community Bankers of America (ICBA).

Last year, Sen. Brown and Sen. Vitter urged the banking regulators— the Federal Reserve, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) — to simplify and strengthen capital rules for banks. In July, regulators proposed new rules to double the leverage requirement and restrict debt to assets for the largest banks.

Stopping Price Controls by Bank Holding Companies

After alarming reports of bank holding companies controlling the price and supply of physical commodities like aluminum or oil, Sen. Brown held a hearing examining this practice and its effects on consumers and manufacturers. In recent years, banks have utilized a number of waivers and loopholes in the law, with occasional sign-off from federal regulators, to expand business operations into physical commodities and energy. Sen. Brown’s hearing shed light on the industry’s practices and focused on the high costs manufacturers and consumers pay for items like a can of soda or beer because of artificially high prices driven up by Wall Street banks.

In response to the hearing, Goldman Sachs made aluminum more accessible to manufacturers, three big banks announced that they were selling their metal warehouses, and an international metal exchange changed its rules to make aluminum more accessible to customers.

Enhancing Oversight and Independence of Banking Consultants

In April, Sen. Brown chaired a hearing examining the role of bank-hired consultants. The hearing focused on the independence, oversight, and quality of services provided by private consultants routinely hired by banks at the behest of regulators to oversee their compliance with government settlements. A recent report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) revealed gaps in the quality of banking regulators' oversight of work provided by independent consultants hired to oversee the Independent Foreclosure Review process (IFR) established in the wake of widespread mortgage servicing errors. In June, Sen. Brown pushed the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) and Federal Reserve to adopt standards to address conflicts of interest in the hiring of consultants. In November, the OCC adopted standards governing the use of independent consultants.

Protecting Ohio's Consumers

During the financial crisis, regulators entrusted with supervising and enforcing consumer protection rules failed to protect middle-class citizens from the irresponsible practices of some financial institutions. Sen. Brown has been leading the charge to ensure that our nation's consumers are protected from misleading financial practices and products.

Calling on the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to Rein in Worrisome Practices

To protect the more than 30 million consumers who have had credit accounts placed with a debt collection agency, Sen. Brown called on the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) to enact rules to rein in debt collection policies that lead to consumer abuses. In a letter to the CFPB, Sen. Brown urged the Bureau to examine practices of both creditors and third-party actors in the industry and suggested a number of rules that would reform the debt collection industry. The Wall Street Reform law gave the CFPB new authority to write rules governing the debt collection industry, and conduct the first on-site examinations of the largest debt collectors to protect consumers. In July, Sen. Brown held a hearing to press the CFPB and Federal Trade Commission (FTC) about troubling practices in the consumer debt collection industry.

Looking Out for Community Banks and Credit Unions

Sen. Brown and Sen. Jerry Moran of Kansas have introduced the *Privacy Notice Modernization Act* to lessen the paperwork burden for small banks and credit unions. Financial institutions—including banks and credit unions—must send their customers an annual privacy notice for the duration of the customer relationship. Unfortunately, these annual privacy notices have become so long, cluttered, and routine that most consumers are either confused by them or they simply do not read them at all. The requirement is quite costly for small institutions like community banks and credit unions. To reduce unnecessary red tape, *The Privacy Notice Modernization Act* would allow a bank that does not share customer information, other than as permitted by one of the exceptions, the option to forego delivery of the annual notice unless there has been a change in the bank's privacy policy. An institution's privacy policy will still be available to customers.

In December, Sen. Brown and Sen. Portman introduced a bill to allow privately insured credit unions membership in the Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB) system. Current law prohibits these institutions from participation due to a 1989 statutory change that expanded FHLB membership only to commercial banks and federally-insured credit unions, preventing any non-federally insured credit union from participation. The Brown-Portman bill would allow privately-insured credit unions to gain access to the federal home loan bank system in order to receive secured loans to make mortgage, small business, and other economic development loans to their members.

Law Enforcement

Fixing our Broken Immigration System

The United States is a nation of immigrants. From the transcontinental railroad to today's technological advancements on the information superhighway, immigrants have helped to build our nation. Sen. Brown believes the solution to the immigration challenges we face will not be simple, but now is the time to take a commonsense approach to immigration reform. That means ensuring that the immigration bill is also a jobs bill that gives American workers a fair chance at fair wage jobs.

At roundtables in Columbus, Cleveland, Dayton, and Toledo, Sen. Brown asked Ohioans about their immigration reform priorities. There was almost unanimous agreement that our broken immigration policy needed to be fixed.

The Senate-passed *Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act* will secure our borders, crack down on employers that hire undocumented immigrants, establish a pathway to citizenship, and support our economy. Not only does the bill take a commonsense approach to immigration reform, but it also reduces our nation's federal budget deficit. The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimated the reforms would cut the deficit by approximately \$197 billion over the first 10 years of its enactment and by \$700 billion the following 10 years.



By reforming our immigration system, Sen. Brown believes we can ensure that everyone plays by the same rules. It will provide fairness for American taxpayers by ensuring that everyone is brought into the system and pays their share in taxes for the services they get. It will provide fairness for businesses that play by the rules and are undercut by competitors who illegally hire undocumented workers. And it will allow undocumented workers to earn citizenship and contribute to our economy by opening businesses, creating jobs, and paying taxes.

However, Sen. Brown also believes that comprehensive immigration reform should ensure that our visa programs do not disadvantage hardworking Americans. That's why Sen. Brown introduced the *H-1B and L-1 Visa Fraud and Abuse Prevention Act of 2013* during Senate consideration of the immigration reform package. Introduced with Sen. Charles Grassley (R-IA), the bipartisan plan would have required employers to make good faith efforts to hire Americans and not hire a foreign worker if there was an equally qualified American applicant. During committee debate of the bill, the provision was altered so that employers now only have to take steps to recruit American workers. They no longer have to give hiring preference to equally or better qualified American workers and can instead seek a visa for the foreign worker.

Sen. Brown believes it is counterproductive to require employers to engage in additional recruiting steps designed to attract qualified U.S. workers without also requiring them to hire these workers if they apply. While he was disappointed that this commonsense proposal was not

brought before the Senate for a vote, he vowed to continue to fight for policies that better protect American workers.

Creating a National Blue Alert System

Sen. Brown cosponsored legislation that would create a national “Blue Alert” system aimed at apprehending criminals who injure or kill law enforcement officers serving in the line of duty. The bill passed the Senate Judiciary Committee in September 2013.

“Every year, dozens of law enforcement officers are killed in the line of duty, with thousands more injured or assaulted while on the job. We can’t prevent every instance of violence against law enforcement officials, but we can do something to track down and apprehend those who engage in these heinous crimes,” Sen. Brown said. “We ask so much of our police officers, from investigating violent crimes to patrolling dangerous neighborhoods. It’s time to give back by setting up a means of protecting them and bringing their assailants to justice,” he added.

According to the FBI, 72 law enforcement officers were killed in 2011, with an additional 54,774 assaulted, in the line of duty.

A national “Blue Alert” system would be modeled after the “Amber Alert” system currently used to notify the public about a missing child. The nationwide alert system would be used to share critical information about the suspect to law enforcement agencies, the public, and the media. It will also assign an existing Department of Justice officer to act as the national coordinator of the Blue Alert communications network.

Florida, Texas, Maryland, Georgia, Delaware, California, Virginia, Mississippi, Tennessee, Utah, Colorado, South Carolina, Washington State, and Kentucky currently have a statewide “Blue Alert” system. Ohio has used the system since June 15, 2012. Minnesota, Alabama, Iowa, North Carolina, Montana, and Missouri are at some stage of considering adopting the system as well.

Tax Policy that Works for Working Ohioans

Extending Crucial Antipoverty Tax Policies

On the heels of Tax Day 2013, Sen. Brown along with Sen. Dick Durbin of Illinois introduced legislation that would permanently enhance critical refundable tax credits that help keep millions of working families out of poverty. Senate Finance Committee Chairman Sen. Max Baucus of Montana joined them in cosigning the bill. In total, 27 members of Congress are co-signers, including 10 from the Senate Finance Committee. The *Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2013* makes permanent provisions of the *American Tax Payer Relief Act* that are set to expire after only five years, strengthens and expands the eligibility of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), and enhances the Child Tax Credit (CTC).

The EITC is a refundable tax credit that encourages work, helps families make ends meet, and leads to healthier, better educated children. In 2012, more than 27 million taxpayers received nearly \$62 billion in EITC benefits. In 2011, according to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the EITC lifted 6.6 million Americans out of poverty, 3.1 million of whom were children – with the average EITC family claiming an average of \$2,200. But in contrast to the EITC for working families with children, the EITC for workers without children remains extremely small, too small even to fully offset federal taxes for workers at the poverty line. Under current law, a childless adult or noncustodial parent working full-time at the minimum wage is ineligible to receive any EITC benefits. Such an individual would receive the maximum EITC if he or she had children. As a result, low-wage workers not raising minor children are the only Americans taxed into poverty.

To fix this problem and help American taxpayers save more money, the *Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2013* would:

- Make permanent enhancements to the Earned Income Tax Credit so that working families with two or more children qualify for an EITC equal to 40 percent of the family's first \$12,570 of income.
- Make permanent enhancements to the Child Tax Credit so that families can reduce federal income tax liability by up to \$1,000 per child. CTC became public law in 1997 through a bipartisan agreement. The 2001 "Bush" Tax Cuts began a phased-in increase of the credit from \$500 - \$1,000 and an increase in the refundable portion of the bill. According to recent estimates, letting the expanded CTC expire would increase taxes on 12 million families who would see the size of their CTC credit shrink, and five million families would no longer be eligible for the credit at all.
- Strengthen the Earned Income Tax Credit to access to the credit, allowing a full time worker receiving the minimum credit to be eligible for the maximum EITC. The bill will also make the credit available to workers without children.

- Change the eligibility age so that individuals older than 25 and younger than 65 are eligible for the childless component of the EITC. The legislation would make individuals older than 21 and younger than 65 eligible.
- Simplify the Earned Income Tax Credit to eliminate a major source of inadvertent fraud by simplifying the rules for claiming the EITC. This bill makes it simple for parents to understand who claims a child and for divorced parents to properly file. The bill also simplifies rules that penalize working families from saving and investing their savings.

A coalition of 300 organizations nationwide wrote a letter to Sens. Brown and Durbin in support of the *Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2013* and its efforts to preserve and strengthen the EITC.

Simplifying the Tax Code for Employers and Workers

In November, Sen. Brown introduced bipartisan legislation with Sen. John Thune of South Dakota that would simplify and standardize state income tax collection for employees who travel outside of their home state for temporary work assignments. The *Mobile Workforce State Income Tax Simplification Act* would help simplify and standardize tax filing for employees and employers who conduct business in multiple states, while working to reduce burdensome and confusing barriers to help ease the cost of doing business for employers and their workers.

While some states require state income tax filing for as little as one day of work in the state, the *Mobile Workforce State Income Tax Simplification Act* would establish a common-sense, 30-day threshold to help ensure that an equitable tax is paid to the state and local jurisdiction where the work is being performed while alleviating employees and employers from burdensome tax requirements.

The *Mobile Workforce State Income Tax Simplification Act* is supported by over 250 organizations and business groups. The Council on State Taxation (COST), a nonprofit trade association that engages in interstate and international business, lists the *Mobile Workforce State Income Tax Simplification Act* as its number one federal legislative priority. This legislation is supported by the American Institute of CPAs, the American Council of Life Insurers, the Financial Services Roundtable, the Motion Picture Association of America, the National Association of Manufacturers, the National Retail Federation, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Ensuring Employers Accurately Classify Their Workers

Tens of thousands of employers currently misclassify workers as “independent contractors” to dodge paying requisite federal taxes. This practice not only robs Americans of appropriately funded federal programs, but it denies misclassified workers their right to standard labor protections such as minimum wage and unemployment insurance.

To address this issue, Sen. Brown introduced the *Fair Playing Field Act of 2013*, legislation that would close the tax loophole currently allowing businesses to circumvent paying billions of dollars in taxes to federal and state governments by intentionally misclassifying workers as “independent contractors.” This legislation would also require employers who use independent

contractors on a regular and ongoing basis to provide each independent contractor with written notification of the labor and employment protections that do not apply to them, such as minimum wage, overtime, unemployment insurance, and workers' compensation.

The bill also protects employers who play by the rules. It prohibits the IRS from retroactively assessing a worker's classification if an employer had a reasonable basis for classifying a worker as an independent contractor. Employers who have reasonable basis for their classifications would also continue to pay reduced penalties if they are found to have misclassified workers, while employers who violate the IRS misclassification guidance without any reasonable basis will pay higher penalties.

Crafting Comprehensive Corporate Tax Reform Legislation

It is time that our corporate tax code encourages investment in the U.S. rather than profits being shifted overseas. Corporate tax reform is necessary to ensure that the American economy can continue to attract investment and compete on an even playing field. Congress can do that by closing down tax havens that cost our country revenue and cost American workers jobs.

Currently, U.S. multinational corporations book more than 40 percent of their profits in so-called "tax havens" that contain seven percent of their actual foreign investments and four percent of their foreign workers. For example, the profits of U.S. controlled foreign corporations booked in Bermuda represent 646 percent of that nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

In November, Sen. Brown applauded the Senate Finance Committee's tax reform draft that included his proposal to overhaul the corporate tax code and spur domestic investment through the establishment of a global minimum tax. A global minimum tax would strengthen American competitiveness by preventing profit shifting and base erosion and shutting down tax havens. The proposal would raise revenue and prevent a global race-to-the-bottom.

Sen. Brown has also worked with Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus of Montana and Ranking Member Orrin Hatch of Utah to outline several key areas of importance for him as Congress takes up tax reform:

- **Domestic Investment:** Whether it's steel in Cleveland, Jeeps in Toledo, natural gas in Cambridge or advanced manufacturing in Columbus, Ohio leads the way in domestic innovation and manufacturing. As any tax reform proposal moves forward, Sen. Brown believes we must consider what changes will mean to industries key to Ohio's economic recovery and job growth. He joined with his colleagues Sen. Bob Casey of Pennsylvania, Sen. Debbie Stabenow of Michigan, and Sen. Ron Wyden of Oregon to ask the Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT), a nonpartisan committee that works on tax legislation, for a sector-by-sector analysis of any comprehensive tax reform proposal to ensure that the primary goals of tax reform, prioritizing new domestic investments and job creation, are achieved. The group of Senators outlined their support for three investment incentives—accelerated depreciation, the domestic production activities deduction, and the Research & Development credit—in order to continue to spur domestic investment.

- **Treatment of Passive Income:** Capital gains, dividends, and interest are taxed at a lower rate than income from work. In addition, unrealized gains attributable to assets and property can avoid taxation entirely when the owner of the asset dies. This preference for capital over work is a fundamental driver of inequality in the tax code. Sen. Brown believes that passive income should be taxed at the same rates as income from work.

Pressing the IRS on Tax Practices

In a departure from long-standing policy, the IRS began applying a ticket tax to travel by private jet and collecting the tax retroactively. Sen. Brown's office collaborated with Sen. Portman in a letter to the Department of the Treasury in order to ascertain the justification for the change in policy.

Working to Create Tax Policy that Increases Economic Mobility for Ohioans

Sen. Brown joined Sen. Wyden and Sen. Moran's Economic Mobility Caucus this year, which works with the Pew Economic Mobility Project to throw bipartisan events designed to raise the issue's profile and explore bipartisan solutions. Sen. Brown hosted his first event as a member of the Caucus in October, paneling a discussion that explored which tax expenditures positively encourage economic mobility and which ones have less of an impact.

Fighting for a Healthy America

Sen. Brown has been working to enhance prevention and improve access to high quality, affordable, evidence-based health care for Ohioans and all Americans including children, seniors, women, and working families.

Protecting Public Health and American Medical Research Innovation

Fighting Big Tobacco

Sen. Brown has worked to reduce the negative effects of tobacco use for Ohioans, including pressing the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to regulate tobacco products to the full extent of their powers, such as the use of graphic warning labels, finalizing their regulatory powers over tobacco, and ensuring that all tobacco products are properly taxed and controlled.



In 2009, Congress passed the *Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act*, which gave the FDA the direct authority to regulate cigarettes and smokeless tobacco. The law also gave the FDA the ability to oversee all tobacco products, like e-cigs, pending a review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This year, Sen. Brown wrote a letter to President Obama urging the administration to expedite OMB's review of "deeming" regulations that would allow the FDA to fight Big Tobacco's efforts to target children and addict them to tobacco products. He also wrote the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to urge that e-cigarette companies be included in their annual report of traditional cigarette marketing. The letter asked that the FTC investigate any makers of e-cigs that offer potentially false, misleading, or deceptive advertising claims that their product is therapeutic.

Sen. Brown is also concerned about the scourge of tobacco on global health. In 2013, he wrote to the office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) to express his concerns regarding the USTR's Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement Tobacco Proposal, which does not currently recognize tobacco as a unique consumer product and may allow tobacco companies to use trade law to subvert domestic tobacco control measures.

Finally, Sen. Brown urged the Obama Administration to put an end to Big Tobacco's latest attempts to use trade law to undermine anti-smoking efforts and to sell and market e-cigs to children. Sen. Brown was joined by Susan Liss, the Executive Director of Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, who helped discuss the means Big Tobacco is willing to take to replace the more than 480,000 American customers it loses each year to tobacco-related death. He will continue his fight to prevent big tobacco from morphing new products and skirting regulations.

Conquering Obesity

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there has been a dramatic increase in obesity in the United States over the past 20 years. Currently, more than one-third of U.S. adults are considered obese and 17 percent of children are obese.

The health reform law includes provisions to help reduce obesity and the problems caused by it. For instance, insurance plans are now required to cover preventive health services, including obesity screenings (a physician's exam as well as a body-mass index measurement) and nutritional counseling, which we know to be a vital part of obesity prevention. The law also requires that vending machines and chain restaurants with more than 20 locations provide consumers with caloric and nutritional information about the items they serve. Finally, the ACA established the Prevention and Public Health Fund, which provides a dedicated, stable funding stream for prevention, wellness, and public health activities. The fund is working to reduce tobacco use, combat obesity and heart disease, and build healthier communities.

Fighting Diabetes

More than 25 million Americans suffer from diabetes, and this number has been growing rapidly in recent years, with 79 million Americans considered pre-diabetic. It is estimated that one out of every three Americans born after 2000 will develop diabetes in his or her lifetime.

Sen. Brown has long supported properly funding diabetes research through the Division of Diabetes Translation at the CDC and the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. In May 2012 and again in 2013, Sen. Brown joined his Senate colleagues in sending a letter to the Senate's Majority and Minority leaders asking for continued support of the Special Diabetes Program (SDP), which has already contributed significant advances in diabetes research. As a result, Congress extended funding to the SDP and the program will remain operational through September 30, 2014.



Along with being physically and emotionally taxing, obesity and diabetes are also costly public health issues that cause more than \$147 billion in medical costs per year. Diabetes patients alone account for nearly one-third of all Medicare spending.

Fighting for National Institutes of Health (NIH) Funding and American Medical Advances

Sen. Brown believes that the NIH is the cornerstone of medical advancement and innovation in the United States, financing lifesaving research to improve the health and well-being of all Americans. He is highly supportive of the NIH's mission and heartened by its successes. However, he is concerned that NIH funding has taken a grave hit due to budget cuts over the last few years and the effects of sequestration.

Not only are these cuts stifling innovation and research, but they are hurting job creation and may even have a lasting effect on the future workforce pipeline of medical researchers. The average age for a principal investigator (PI) receiving his or her first grant continues to increase, as does the average age for all PIs. In essence, we are losing scientists focusing on basic science

and research on innovations that are not yet profitable enough to be championed by private industry. Maintaining robust funding levels for NIH is vitally important to reverse these trends.



Sen. Brown strongly supports ample funding for NIH, which is why he signed a letter with other Senate colleagues asking for the Appropriations Committee to generously fund NIH efforts in Fiscal Year 2014. Funding NIH research will help advance ground-breaking discoveries that lead to better understanding of disease processes, treatments, and health outcomes for Americans.

Sen. Brown recently sent a letter to National Cancer Institute (NCI) Director Harold Varmus, requesting that he improve stomach cancer's research portfolio and continue to support additional efforts to fund gastric cancer research. This was on the heels of the successful passage and signing of the *Recalcitrant Cancer Act* in early 2013. He was an original cosponsor of this vital piece of legislation aimed at working with the Director of NCI to focus attention on especially virulent cancers with five year survival rates under 50 percent. The *Recalcitrant Cancer Act* directs working groups to focus on a specific cancer, such as pancreatic or lung cancer, to assist in developing a strategic scientific framework, identifying promising advancements, and outlining a plan to coordinate efforts. By concentrating efforts and pooling federal and nonfederal resources, Sen. Brown believes cancer research will make progress on these deadly cancers that have thus far been elusive.

Fighting for Greater Resources at the Center for Disease Control

Sen. Brown joined Sen. Isakson of Georgia to urge Congress to provide greater support and resources to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), headquartered in Sen. Isakson's home state of Georgia. Sens. Brown and Isakson spoke on the Senate Floor to discuss the CDC's diminished base budget authority, which is at a decade low and has left the CDC weakened in its ability to keep Americans healthy and prevent pandemics.

Earlier in the year, Sen. Brown met with CDC Director Dr. Thomas Frieden to discuss the avian flu, which poses a significant risk in becoming a pandemic. This strain of flu is novel, and therefore humans have not developed resistance through prior exposure. To combat the flu's spread, or better prepare citizens for it, the CDC needs increased funding and financial flexibility to monitor and respond to the disease, as well as a myriad of other threats Americans face on a daily basis.

Sen. Brown also chaired a Congressional Executive Commission on China (CECC) hearing on "Food and Drug Safety, Public Health, and the Environment in China." Among other issues of concern, the hearing examined an avian influenza outbreak in China that has garnered widespread attention.

Defending Community Health Centers

Sen. Brown continues to champion the important work of community health centers (CHCs). To recognize his work, the Ohio Association of Community Health Centers presented Sen. Brown with their annual Distinguished Community Health Defender Award.

CHCs provide indispensable primary care by offering a wide range of comprehensive health and support services to underserved and uninsured patients nationwide. There are more than 1,200 CHCs throughout the U.S. and over 18 million people receive services from these primary care facilities. In Ohio alone, CHCs serve more than half a million individuals. CHCs have reduced infant mortality for their patients by 40 percent, cut down emergency room visits, and improved health outcomes for patients with chronic diseases.

To support the incredible work of CHCs, Sen. Brown joined 53 of his colleagues in sending a letter to the Senate Committee on Appropriations urging continued support for the health centers program. CHCs save approximately \$24 billion through primary and preventive health services. By providing care to under and uninsured individuals, individuals are able to access care, stay out of the costly emergency room, and take control of their own health.

The Department of Health and Human Services is also working with the CHCs to help uninsured Americans learn about the new health reform law, the *Affordable Care Act* (ACA). Through grant funding, CHCs will be able to help their patients access affordable health insurance. Thirty-six CHCs in Ohio received a combined \$3.7 million to support education and enrollment efforts.

Promoting Women's and Infants' Health

Sen. Brown is a leading advocate for women's health, fighting to protect reproductive rights, promote preventive care, end gender discrimination in health insurance, and reduce reproductive diseases and health disparities. He believes that every baby deserves a chance for a healthy and happy start in life.

Protecting Reproductive rights

Throughout 2013, Ohio and many other states were subjected to insidious efforts directed at whittling away women's reproductive rights. Sen. Brown is working with colleagues in Congress to slow this tide by supporting legislation that protects a woman's right to make her own health decisions and take charge of her reproductive health.

He introduced the *Access to Birth Control Act*, aimed at ensuring that pharmacies do not make it difficult for women to obtain contraceptives, and cosponsored The *Women's Health Protection Act*, which would protect a woman's constitutional right to access safe and legal abortion services regardless of the state in which she lives. By creating federal protections, Sen. Brown believes these bills would help protect women from inappropriate restrictions on access to family planning and abortion services.

Promoting Preventive Care for Women

Thanks to the *Affordable Care Act* (ACA), which Sen. Brown has championed, health insurance must cover comprehensive women's preventive care and screenings at no additional cost to

women. These preventive services are based on guidelines supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and include services such as well-woman visits, pregnancy and postpartum depression screenings, screenings for domestic violence, annual women's health screenings, family planning services, and cervical cancer screenings.

Ending Gender Discrimination in Health Insurance

Prior to the passage of the health law, it was legal in nine states for insurance companies to deny coverage to women who were survivors of domestic violence because it was considered a pre-existing condition. Pregnancy could also be considered a pre-existing condition, thus excluding maternity coverage for the 14 million women who purchased their coverage through the individual insurance market. And, in most states, women had been charged higher premiums, sometimes 150 percent more than men. That is why Sen. Brown supported the *Women's Health Amendment*, included in the health law, which requires health plans to cover comprehensive women's preventive care screenings at no additional cost to women.

Working to Reduce Health Disparities and Breast Cancer Rates

Breast cancer is the most common form of cancer among women, with one in eight women who will develop it. Breast cancer is a leading cause of cancer death in women, and women of color have disproportionately higher rates of advanced breast cancer at the time of diagnosis and significantly worse prognoses for recovery.

Sen. Brown believes that ensuring that women have access to timely and effective treatments for breast cancer should be a priority of the federal government. With this in mind, he introduced the *Accelerating the End of Breast Cancer Act*, which would establish a commission with the goal of ending breast cancer by January 1, 2020. The Commission would evaluate research projects or potential programs that need additional attention or funding then identify opportunities for public-private collaboration.

He also introduced bipartisan legislation, the *Breast Cancer Patient Education Act*, to ensure that women who have had breast cancer surgery are aware of their covered options for reconstructive measures or prostheses. Research has shown that although insurance is required to cover reconstructive options, many women are not aware of their options; and women of color are least likely to be apprised of their options. This bill requires the Department of Health and Human Services to develop education campaigns to inform women of their options, with an emphasis on educating women of color.

Ensuring Healthy Pregnancies and Babies

Americans have a stake in healthy moms and healthy babies. Nearly a quarter of all hospitalizations are related to childbearing women and newborns, and more than 40 percent of them are covered by Medicaid. We have a responsibility to make sure that moms and babies get the best possible care, and that we are holding Medicaid accountable by measuring and evaluating its performance and by giving providers the tools they need to improve care. Sen. Brown is a sponsor of the *Quality Care for Moms and Babies Act*, which would speed up the development of evidence-based measures of quality and health outcomes, leading to evidence-based standardized guidelines on the delivery of maternity care.

And though the infant mortality rate in America decreased by 12 percent between 2005 and 2011, Ohio's infant mortality rate has not experienced a significant down-trend over the past decade. The national average is 6.1 deaths per 1,000 live births, whereas in Ohio there are 7.7 deaths per 1,000 live births. The rate is twice as high in communities of color in Ohio. Sen. Brown is working to ensure that programs that can reduce the infant mortality are active and well-funded. For example, he has written letters to the Obama Administration seeking robust support for Healthy Start programs, which aim to reduce low birth weight and infant mortality as well as health disparities in communities of color in the crucial pre-natal, peri-natal, and post-natal periods. Ohio has two Healthy Start programs, *Caring for 2* in Columbus and *MomsFirst* in Cleveland. The *MomsFirst* program is one of the 15 original sites and has cut the local infant mortality rate by 48 percent.

Healthy Start programs serve pregnant women and families by facilitating access to early prenatal care and providing services such as outreach, home visits, case management, health education, and depression screening to ensure the birth of a healthy newborn.

Safeguarding Children's Health

A healthy and productive adulthood begins with a healthy childhood. That is why Sen. Brown has worked to increase the number of pediatric physicians, promote the science behind treatments and cures for pediatric diseases and disorders, and ensure health insurance coverage for children.

Ensuring a Robust Pediatric Workforce

Following significant declines in pediatric training residencies in the 1990s, Sen. Brown authored legislation that created funding for residency training for pediatric providers, referred to as Children's Graduate Medical Education (CHGME).

The CHGME program provides freestanding children's hospitals—including seven in Ohio—with resources to help them sustain, improve, and expand their teaching and training opportunities. CHGME hospitals train 40 percent of the country's general pediatricians and 43 percent of the pediatric specialists. Over the last decade, Sen. Brown has ensured the continuation of the program through reauthorization legislation and appropriations.

Despite these important advances, the shortage of pediatric doctors still persists in many parts of our country. These shortages contribute to vacancies in children's hospitals that often last 12 months or more. No child should have to wait days, weeks, or months to see a doctor. Sen. Brown fought to create the CHGME program and to ensure its sustained and adequate funding.

Sen. Brown was an original cosponsor of the *CHGME Reauthorization Act*, which was passed in the Senate and will reauthorize the program for an additional five years. Last spring, he led a letter to the Senate Budget Committee signed by 25 of his Senate colleagues seeking \$317 million in CHGME funding. CHGME was funded at \$269.4 million in fiscal year 2013; the new Senate reauthorization seeks funding at \$300 million per year.

Enhancing Research on Pediatric Diseases and Disorders

While children make up about 20 percent of the U.S. population, only about five percent of the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) annual research is devoted to pediatrics. If this rate of investment is not expanded, discoveries of new treatments and therapies for some of the most devastating childhood diseases and conditions will be hindered, and the next generation of researchers may be discouraged from entering the field of pediatrics.

In 2013, Sen. Brown, along with Sen. Wicker (R-MS), introduced the *National Pediatric Research Network Act*, a bill that directs the NIH to establish a nationally-coordinated pediatric research network focused on pursuing new treatments and cures with the intent to save the lives of children and prevent childhood illnesses from evolving into life-threatening and debilitating conditions in adulthood. This bipartisan bill seeks to build on the important body of work in pediatric research that the NIH already supports. These research networks will allow for the participation of multiple institutions through the use of a "hub and spoke" arrangement, with one or more central pediatric medical centers collaborating with other supporting sites, sharing data, and speeding discoveries from lab to bedside.

On November 27, 2013, President Obama signed the *National Pediatric Research Network Act* into law.

Pursuing Effective and Timely Treatment

Sen. Brown works to find innovative means to provide access to medical care and supports common-sense solutions to problems in the medical care of children.

For instance, Sen. Brown is working on an innovative plan for caring for *medically-complex children*. Forty percent of U.S. children receive medical care through Medicaid. Of those, six percent (two million) have medically-complex conditions. These medically-complex conditions account for about 40 percent of Medicaid spending for children. These children have multiple illnesses and disabilities, often see six or more specialists, and require care that takes them across state lines. Because each state Medicaid program is different, receiving care across state lines is an administrative challenge. Fragmented care means that families must travel to where the specialists practice, and it is difficult to ensure all medical professionals are coordinating care delivery.

A group of children's hospitals, including Rainbow Babies, Akron Children's, Cincinnati Children's, Dayton Children's, and Nationwide Children's, has worked to develop a plan for an accountable care collaboration that would coordinate networks of services for children with medical complexities. Sen. Brown has worked with these hospitals to bring this concept to fruition and cosponsored a Medicaid children's Care Coordination Program amendment in December 2013 that would establish such a structure. That amendment was not voted upon, but Sen. Brown will work with his colleagues to develop a bill to create this care model that would enhance care and save Medicaid costs.

Sen. Brown is intent on ensuring that important treatments are available to children and adults alike. In May, he was apprised of a shortage of trace minerals that are used in tube feeding for fragile preemies and other seriously ill patients by Ohio children's hospitals and joined

colleagues on a letter imploring the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to find creative solutions to this shortage. As a result, the FDA found a supplier in a country with a known safe supply chain to fill the need until American manufacturing could resume.

Finally, Sen. Brown cosponsored the *School Access to Emergency Epinephrine Act*, which encourages states to improve access in schools to epinephrine auto-injections to be used if a student is suffering from a life-threatening (anaphylactic) allergic reaction. While students are permitted to self-administer an epinephrine injection, 25 percent of all anaphylaxis cases at schools happen when a student without a previous allergic reaction suffers an attack. As these students are unaware of their allergy, they do not carry an epinephrine injection. This legislation rewards states that require schools to have a supply of epinephrine on hand, trains school personnel how to administer the injection, and requires states to apply “Good Samaritan” laws to school officials who administer the injections. This legislation was passed in Congress and signed into law on November 13, 2013.



Shepherding Health Reforms and Protecting Insurance Safety Nets

Getting America Insured

The *Affordable Care Act* (ACA) is the most significant reform to our nation’s health care system since Medicare’s creation in 1965. It ends insurance coverage denials for those with pre-existing conditions, limits unjustifiable premium rate hikes, and caps on annual and lifetime insurance coverage limits.

The health care law lowers costs for seniors; since the passage of the ACA, more than 7.3 million seniors and people with disabilities nationally have saved more than \$8.9 billion on prescription drug costs because the law closed the Medicare Part D coverage gap, known as the “donut hole.” In 2013 alone, more than 166,000 Ohio seniors saved more than \$152 million—an average of \$913 in savings per beneficiary.

Health reform will lower costs for all taxpayers. Over the next two decades, the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that it will reduce the federal deficit by more than \$210 billion.

In addition, Ohio decided to expand Medicaid under the ACA in 2013. According to Kaiser Family Foundation projections, Medicaid expansion will provide Ohio with more than \$17 billion in federal funding from fiscal years 2014 to 2019. Ohio will provide \$830 million in matching funds. This Medicaid expansion projection will provide more than 300,000 currently uninsured Ohioans with access to affordable health care.

Safeguarding Hard-Hit Health Care Consumers

The Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) helps retirees who lost their health care coverage when their employers either entered into bankruptcy or moved operations overseas. It is intended to help make health insurance more affordable for displaced workers while they learn more about their options and transition to other insurance plans of their choosing.

Sen. Brown has been fighting to preserve this provision over the past few years. He successfully fought for an extension of the HCTC from October 2011 through December 2013. As the program's scheduled sun-setting drew near, he introduced an amendment to the *Sustainable Growth Rate Repeal Act* in December that would provide a one-year extension of the program and cosponsored another bipartisan amendment that would extend the program. Further, he has introduced legislation, the *Health Care Coverage for Displaced Workers Act* to increase the size of the credit and permanently extend it for early retirees until they qualify for Medicare.

Sen. Brown, along with Sen. Portman, introduced an amendment during Finance Committee consideration of the Medicare Sustainable Growth Rate SGR legislation that would extend the HCTC. He also supported efforts by Sen. Reid to pass a package of tax extenders including HCTC. This package of extenders was blocked by a partisan, procedural objection.

Sen. Brown shares the frustration of Ohio retirees and will continue to advocate on their behalf. Although he understands the pressure companies face during the economic turnaround, he believes retirees who have worked hard and played by the rules deserve much better.

Preserving Medicare and Medicaid

Medicare and Medicaid are essential social programs that reaffirm the government's commitment to seniors and low-income Americans. Prior to the creation of Medicare in 1965, only half of America's seniors had health insurance, and most of those with insurance only had coverage for inpatient hospital care. Additionally, some 30 percent of seniors lived below the poverty line.

Now, only 1.8 percent lack health coverage and less than nine percent live below the poverty line. Medicaid provides health coverage for low-income Americans – primarily children, people with disabilities, poor seniors, and pregnant women. Sixty-eight million Americans currently receive health care through Medicaid. Sen. Brown is committed to ensuring that Medicare and Medicaid remain strong for our country's most vulnerable populations.

In Ohio, the Medicaid program is an essential part of the state's health care system. It is a long-term care system for people with disabilities and the state's economy. In December, the Senate Finance Committee voted to pass Sen. Brown's amendment to help secure an additional five years of *Transitional Medical Assistance* (TMA) for working Ohio families. Currently, many low-income families lose Medicaid when their earnings increase, but become eligible for temporary Medicaid coverage for six months to a year.

Extending the expiring TMA will help keep low-income families healthy while they make the critical transition from unemployment to working or as they move up the employment ladder. Sen. Brown believes that Americans shouldn't have to choose between a job and health care.

TMA provides extended Medicaid coverage to members of low income families who would otherwise lose Medicaid and potentially become uninsured because of an increase in hours or income from employment. TMA ensures that families can retain their Medicaid coverage as their income fluctuates, which is common among low-income families.

Throughout 2013, many other Members of Congress proposed other ways to undermine Medicare's guaranteed benefits. Some want to raise the eligibility age for seniors to receive Medicare. Sen. Brown opposes efforts to increase the eligibility age; he believes we can increase Medicare's solvency, while ensuring that it continues to serve older Americans without cutting benefits or raising the eligibility age.

Protecting Access to and Proper use of Affordable, Safe Prescription Drugs

Ensuring a Safe Drug Supply

After the actions of the New England Compounding Center caused more than 700 patients across the country to contract fungal meningitis in 2012 and 2013, Congressional briefings and hearings were held to better understand the scope of the problem and examine potential ways to stop future infectious outbreaks. After months of stakeholder meetings to understand the sources of the problem and to outline potential solutions, the *Drug Quality and Security Act* was created. This bipartisan and bicameral bill was signed into law by President Obama on November 27, 2013. Throughout this process, Sen. Brown heard from compounding pharmacists and patients across Ohio regarding their concerns and ideas on how to improve the bill at each phase of development, resulting in quality legislation that balanced the need for public safety with the ability of compounders to continue to make special preparations for specific patient needs.

The bill was combined with another drug safety initiative that outlines critical steps to build an electronic, interoperable system to identify and trace certain prescription drugs as they are distributed in the United States. This system will eventually lead to unit-level unique identifiers that will verify where a drug has been in the supply chain, reducing theft as well as illegal repackaging and sale and decreasing the difficulties of responding to drug recalls.

The *Drug Quality and Security Act* will help ensure that bad actors like the New England Compounding Center do not convert themselves from compounding pharmacists to compounding manufacturers without proper oversight. And it will enhance the FDA's ability to protect consumers from exposure to drugs that may be counterfeit, stolen, contaminated, or otherwise harmful.

Sen. Brown also supports giving the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services the authority to negotiate drug prices as one way to increase solvency of the Medicare program. That is why he introduced the *Medicare Drug Savings Act*, which would allow the Secretary to negotiate bulk discounts—the same way the Veterans Administration is able to for our veterans—and has the potential to save more than \$150 billion over ten years. Furthermore, the *Affordable Care Act* added benefits for seniors including free wellness visits and health screenings while also extending the solvency of Medicare by eight additional years.

Preventing Abuse of Medications

Ohio is second only to Florida in the number of oxycodone prescriptions filled, and Ohio's death rate due to unintentional drug poisoning increased more than 350 percent from 1999 to 2008. In 2007, unintentional drug poisoning became the leading cause of accidental death in Ohio, surpassing motor vehicle crashes and suicide for the first time on record. Prescription pain medications, such as oxycodone, morphine, and methadone are largely responsible for increasing numbers of overdoses and deaths in Ohio.

Sen. Brown has led the fight to crack down on prescription drug abuse, including efforts to shutter pill mills and end the practices of "doctor shopping" and "pharmacy hopping." He alerts Ohioans each year of opportunities to bring unused prescriptions to sites all around the state for safe disposal as part of National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day. He recently wrote a letter to the Department of Health and Human Services asking for action against providers who engage in aberrant painkiller prescribing practices. In January 2014, the agency released new rules for revoking Medicare enrollment for abusive prescribing practices.

Finally, Sen. Brown is working on bipartisan legislation that will require the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to curb the fraudulent diversion and abuse of prescription drugs involving Medicare beneficiaries. Specifically, it requires that the Secretary establish steps to identify excessive, non-medically necessary uses of prescription drugs and fraudulent behavior and implement appropriate education and controls, while still ensuring necessary beneficiary access to medication.

Enhancing Effectiveness of Prescribed Medications

Sen. Brown is also an original cosponsor of the *Medication Therapy Management (MTM) Empowerment Act*, which would extend an existing program so that more Medicare beneficiaries can benefit from assistance managing medications. The current program created a partnership between pharmacists, patients, and other health professionals to promote the safe and effective use of medications and help ensure patients gain the targeted health benefits from their medications. Individual counseling sessions between patients with multiple chronic illnesses and pharmacists have granted patients more control over their health care and have been shown to reduce overall health care expenditures and patient out-of-pocket costs. The proposed bill would expand senior's access to MTM services and allow seniors suffering from only one illness to participate.

Keeping Drug Costs Down

Sen. Brown is an original cosponsor of the *Medicare Drug Saving Act*. This bill would eliminate a special deal for brand-name drug manufacturers that allows them to charge Medicare higher prices for some seniors' prescription drugs. It would require drug companies to provide rebates to the federal government on drugs used by nearly 340,000 Ohio dual eligibles— people eligible for Medicare and Medicaid, who are predominantly low-income seniors— just as was done for dual eligibles on Medicaid before the creation of Medicare's private prescription drug program, Medicare Part D, in 2006.

With the exception of Medicare Part D, all large purchasers of prescription drugs negotiate better prices, including the Medicaid system and private insurers. This bill reinstates the ability of the

Medicaid system to negotiate prices for low-income Medicare beneficiaries, just as they do for Medicaid beneficiaries that are not also eligible for Medicare. It corrects the excessive payments to drug companies while also saving taxpayers and the federal government from footing unnecessary costs. Over the past ten years, the eleven largest drug companies alone took \$711.4 billion in profits, including a 62 percent increase from 2003 to 2012.

According to the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, the Medicare Drug Savings Act would save more than \$141 billion by helping to responsibly reduce the deficit by ending a special interest giveaway that requires the government to pay a higher rate for prescription drugs.

Protecting Ohio's Seniors

Sen. Brown is working to ensure that seniors are not exposed to unsafe prescribing practices and have more support to help them manage their chronic illnesses.

Sen. Brown is a cosponsor of the *Older Americans Act (OAA) Reauthorization*. This broad-ranging legislation is the major vehicle for the delivery of social and nutrition services for older persons. The programs included in the OAA have made a tremendous difference in the lives of the elderly, and these programs will become increasingly important as the senior population grows.

Strengthening Rehabilitative Services for Seniors

Sen. Brown appreciates the critical role therapists play in our nation's health and long-term care systems. Without the rehabilitative care these professionals provide, their patients' quality of life would seriously decline and the number of costly hospitalizations would increase. Currently, Medicare policy applies a \$1,900 cap on outpatient occupational therapy, and a \$1,900 cap on physical therapy and speech language pathology services combined. The practice of placing an annual cap on Medicare rehabilitation services began in 1997 under the *Balanced Budget Act*, but Congress has eased this restriction each year since.

Sen. Brown supports a full repeal of the Medicare outpatient therapy caps, which is why he is a cosponsor of the *Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Services Act*. Eliminating the therapy cap allows for Medicare rehabilitation services and coverage to be more flexible and responsive to individual patient needs, which is crucial when considering the diverse and complex needs of patients. Currently, the Senate Finance Committee has voted, as part of the Sustainable Growth Rate Repeal, to repeal these caps as well.

Improving Diagnosis and Care for Alzheimer Patients

As more than five million Americans suffer from Alzheimer disease, Sen. Brown is working to improve diagnosis and care. He is an original cosponsor of the *Health Outcomes, Planning, and Education (HOPE) for Alzheimer's Act*, which encourages physicians to complete thorough evaluations and chart documentation of Alzheimer's disease, as well as care planning services for newly diagnosed patients and their families.

Advocating for Social Security's Vital Role in Retirement Security

Social Security provides a foundation for retirement security that is needed more than ever. Current workers approaching retirement age have an average retirement savings of less than \$27,000. One third of Americans age 45-64 have nothing saved for retirement at all. This leaves families with tough choices about delaying retirement or providing financial support in other ways.

Nearly 50 percent of American retirees will be below or near the poverty line, living on a food budget of about \$5 per day. In 1979, nearly two-thirds of private workers with an employer-provided retirement plan had a defined benefit plan. Today, that number has dwindled to seven percent. Because of a decline in defined benefit pensions and the risk inherent in private retirement accounts, more seniors depend exclusively on Social Security upon retirement. In fact, more than 75 percent of low-income households rely on Social Security benefits for all of their retirement income. For the 35 million retired workers receiving Social Security benefits in 2010, the annual benefit was \$14,000. Even this modest benefit lifted 22 million Americans out of poverty.

As Chairmen of the Senate Finance Committee's Subcommittee on Social Security, Pensions and Family Policy, Sen. Brown chaired a hearing entitled "The Role of Social Security, Defined Benefits, and Private Retirement Accounts in the face of the Retirement Crisis" that addressed the decline of defined benefit plans, the emergence of defined contribution plans, and Social Security's fundamental role in retirement security.

The hearing also examined the positive impact that social insurance has on our economy. In October, the Association for the Advancement of Retired Persons (AARP) released a report revealing that Social Security paid \$774.6 billion in benefits in 2012, which supported 9.2 million jobs, \$370 billion in salaries, and over \$200 billion in federal, state, and local tax revenue.

Enhancing Mental Health Care

Sen. Brown believes that expanding access to quality mental health services should be a national priority, which is why he was an original cosponsor and voted for the successful passage of *The Mental Health Parity Act*. This legislation will help the 54 million Americans with mental illness gain access to treatment. It will give mental health patients the same coverage and cost-sharing as that provided to patients who need medical or surgical services. In effect, the *Mental Health Parity Act* helps end discrimination against those with mental illness and ends an unjust health disparity. Mental health care is an essential component of our health care system, and it is important to ensure that all Americans have access to these essential services.

The new health law, the *Affordable Care Act*, builds on the *Mental Health Parity Act* to extend parity protections to more than 62 million Americans. The health law requires all individual and small group insurance plans to cover mental health and substance use disorder services as one of ten essential health benefits. And thanks to the health law, as of January 1, 2014, insurance plans were no longer able to deny coverage to individuals with mental illness, and insurers are unable

to use mental illness as a reason to raise anyone's premiums.

Sen. Brown is also pleased to have cosponsored *The Excellence in Mental Health Act*. If passed into law, this initiative would improve access to mental health care by establishing Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics that would operate and receive financial benefits similar to Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC), allowing them to reach upward of 1.5 million Americans living with mental illness who currently do not have ready and affordable mental health care.

Caring for the mental health needs of our children is also a crucial public health issue, as one in five youths in the United States experience mental illness, and 70 percent of adolescents with mental health problems do not receive care. The good news is that, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration, behavioral and emotional problems decreased by 31 percent among youth with mental health issues after 6 months of receiving mental health care. Within one year of entering a mental health program, the school attendance rates of youth and their grades increased significantly. In addition, the number of students involved in violent incidents decreased by 15 percent within three years of a school implementing a mental health program.

Despite this comprehensive evidence showing the importance of access to mental health and substance use disorder services, many students struggle to access the care they need. School staff can play an important role in helping to identify and support children with mental health problems, but proper training and funding are essential to the success of school-based efforts. Sen. Brown is an original cosponsor of the *Mental Health in Schools Act*, which would expand access to mental health services in schools through a grant program to support schools that work with community-based organizations to provide student access to mental health services. The grant program would also provide assistance for schools to train staff, volunteers, families, and other members of the community to recognize the signs of behavioral health problems in students and refer them for appropriate services.

Finally, Sen. Brown is working to make it easier for Ohio's seniors to access the care of psychologists, who already deliver almost half of the psychotherapy services to Medicare beneficiaries in the hospital outpatient setting and more than 70 percent of the psychotherapy services in the hospital inpatient, partial hospital, and residential care settings. He introduced the *Medicare Mental Health Access Act*, which would allow psychologists to operate independently in all relevant Medicare settings just as they can in the private insurance market. This legislation would help ensure that seniors have increased access to mental health services

Working to Revitalize Our Neighborhoods

Facilitating Discussions between Ohioans and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

To prevent excessive blight in Northeast Ohio neighborhoods hit hard by the foreclosure crisis, Sen. Brown was proud to announce a deal he facilitated that extended a contract between the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Cuyahoga County Land Bank. The deal allows for the continued affordable purchase of HUD properties by the Cuyahoga County Land Bank so that low value properties can either be redeveloped or demolished for future development. In December of 2012, HUD's contract with the Cuyahoga County Land Bank expired and was not renewed. The following month, Sen. Brown organized a call during which HUD and the Cuyahoga County Land Bank negotiated a new contract through Sept. 30, 2013, the end of the Department's Fiscal Year 2013.



Sen. Brown has long championed legislation that would revitalize neighborhoods hit hard by the foreclosure crisis. In 2010, after Sen. Brown sent a letter to Pres. Obama urging that Hardest Hit Fund (HHF) funding be used to help Ohioans combat foreclosures, Ohio received more than \$500 million. In June, Sen. Brown urged Governor Kasich to balance the needs of foreclosure prevention and neighborhood stabilization and repurpose \$60 million in remaining HHF funding for demolition. In August, the U.S. Department of the Treasury approved a proposal by the Ohio Housing Finance Agency to use \$60 million for demolition in the hardest hit Ohio counties.

With his Republican colleague from Alaska, Sen. Lisa Murkowski, Sen. Brown unveiled a plan that would improve the housing market by addressing “short sale” home sales. Short sales are real estate transactions that must be approved by the bank because the seller owes more on their mortgage than the proposed sale price. Sen. Brown's bipartisan *Prompt Notification of Short Sale Act* addresses the lengthy closing process that often comes with a short sale—which can last months—by requiring banks to respond in a timely manner when prospective buyers are attempting to purchase a home, thereby providing both buyers and sellers of short sale properties with predictability during a real estate transaction. Currently, it can take months to get any kind of response to short sale offers from banks or other loan servicers.

Enhancing the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) may be the country's most successful affordable housing program. It finances approximately 90 percent of all affordable housing developments nationwide and is making a difference all across Ohio. Examples include Lucas County, where it provided the capital to build Lakewoods, a 48-home complex for low-income seniors, and Cuyahoga County, where the credit funded the redevelopment of historic Cogswell Hall. These are just two of many examples of the impact the program has made.

In September, Sen. Brown announced that he would cosponsor legislation to extend and enhance the LIHTC to help Ohioans build affordable housing developments and create jobs. The bill would extend the nine percent minimum credit for the construction or substantial rehabilitation of property and establish a four percent minimum credit for acquisition of existing housing.

The LIHTC provides tax credits to affordable housing developments that use them to attract private equity capital to help finance the properties. The LIHTC provides two kinds of credits: one for 70 percent of the cost (in present value) of constructing or substantially rehabilitating property, and one for 30 percent of the cost (in present value) of acquiring existing property. The higher the rate, the more attractive the credits and the more capital Ohio can attract.

Unless Congress acts to lock-in these rates, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) would automatically decrease the minimum rate for the housing credit. This would reduce the number of LIHTC projects by limiting access to capital. This bill will establish a floor for the credit rates, which will protect this critical tool for Ohio's housing market.

Transportation and Infrastructure

Realizing that a strong infrastructure is the foundation for job creation and economic development, Sen. Brown is a vocal advocate for investing in infrastructure to create jobs and promote our nation's long-term economic growth. Ohio's central location and system of highways, ports, rails, and airports has supported the state's economic growth and helped ensure a leading role in the logistics industry. A lack of investment in our infrastructure cedes a competitive advantage to emerging economies like China, imperils public health and safety, and harms our environment.

Investing in Roads and Bridges

Continued underinvestment in Ohio's roads and bridges leads to traffic jams, unsafe roads and bridges, and lost business productivity. These investments are especially critical to the construction industry, where unemployment rates outpace those of the overall working population.

According to the Federal Highway Administration, for every \$1 billion spent on highway and bridge construction, nearly 28,000 jobs are created. These include direct jobs involved in construction work, indirect jobs created by the purchase of supplies for projects, and induced jobs supported by new consumer spending when Americans go back to work.

Additionally, infrastructure investments including transportation improvements and ensuring clean, affordable water help attract economic development. According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, over the coming years there is a \$1.6 trillion shortfall in our infrastructure investments that could lead to substantial costs in lost productivity, reduced trade, and job loss.

Reinvesting in Ohio's Maritime Heritage

Ohio's ports have long played a critical role in our heavy industries and shipping our raw materials and grains to the world. Yet, years of sediment buildup in shipping channels has made it difficult for ships to maneuver. Sen. Brown's proposed solution to this problem would be to increase the amount of funding from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund into our nation's ports. Currently, a small fee is collected on cargo that comes into port; this fee is deposited into the Trust Fund and revenues are used to dredge shipping panels or improve port operations. However, despite overwhelming need, current and past Administrations have declined to spend these funds on port maintenance. That's why Sen. Brown has been a longtime supporter of the *Harbor Maintenance Act*, which is supported by Ohio's ports and shippers.

In 2013, Sen. Brown, along with his Great Lakes colleagues, were successful in their efforts to increase funding for dredging in the Great Lakes via amendments included in the Senate-passed *Water Resources Development Act of 2013*. The amendments would reduce the dredging backlog by increasing the amount spent on harbor and port maintenance and ensure that the Great Lakes would receive 20 percent of Harbor Maintenance funds above 2012 levels. Sen. Brown worked with the Ports of Cleveland and Toledo on this important legislative improvement.

Sen. Brown also introduced a bipartisan bill to once again allow the steam-powered paddlewheeler, the *Delta Queen*, to travel the nation's rivers on overnight trips.

Improving Motorcoach Safety

After five years of bipartisan work, 2012 saw the passage of Sen. Brown's *Motorcoach Enhanced Safety Act* into law. Sen. Brown first introduced the act following a 2007 crash of a tour bus carrying 33 Bluffton University baseball players that claimed seven lives. The bill, supported by passenger safety advocates as well as Greyhound, will ensure better trained drivers and seatbelts, stronger windows, and more protective roofs on tour buses. Throughout the year, Sen. Brown pressed the Department of Transportation and the Office of Management and Budget to implement the *Motorcoach Enhanced Safety Act* in a robust manner. In the fall of 2013, the Department of Transportation announced that, for the first time, beginning in 2017, all new tour buses will be required to have seatbelts. This was a key tenant of Sen. Brown's bill and is the first of many new safety improvements that will result because of his bill.

Working with Community Stakeholders in Findlay and Ottawa

Following 2007's devastating flood of the Blanchard River in Findlay and Ottawa, Sen. Brown has worked with community stakeholders, local businesses, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to determine the best way to prevent future flooding events. The leadership of the local community has resulted in the ongoing work to determine the best path forward to deal with the Blanchard River. Sen. Brown has worked on a bipartisan basis with other members of the Ohio congressional delegation to accelerate work by the USACE on the project and to ensure that it receives the prioritization it deserves. Additionally, Sen. Brown introduced a bipartisan amendment with Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina to the *Water Resources Development Act of 2013* to ensure that projects like the Blanchard River Flood Mitigation Project are eligible to receive continued federal funding upon the completion of a "Chief's Report." Without this provision, worthy projects like in Findlay and Ottawa could have to wait years for congressional approval of the project, putting local communities in harm's way and potentially adding millions in construction costs.

Defense, Military, and Homeland Security

Sen. Brown believes that supporting our troops and their families is a responsibility we all share. This means ensuring that our troops receive the support and resources necessary to defend and maintain our country's security. From providing top-of-the-line body armor and readily-equipped vehicles, to ensuring fair pay for servicemembers and easing the transition to civilian life for returning service members, Sen. Brown continues to fight for all Ohioans who serve or have served in our Armed Forces, making sure these brave men and women receive the material, support, and benefits they have earned.

Fighting for Ohio Defense Installations and Defense Manufacturing Jobs

Working to Pass a Comprehensive National Defense Bill

Sen. Brown worked with colleagues from both sides of the aisle to craft a National Defense Authorization Bill that creates jobs, grows the economy, and reduces the deficit while keeping America safe. The efforts of Sen. Brown helped maintain critical investments in Ohio's military infrastructure, protect Ohio jobs, redevelop Ohio's communities, and advance medical research and innovation across the state.



Sen. Brown proposed legislation to ensure that any unused military equipment will not be sent to other nations without first being properly vetted. He has also proposed legislation to require all American flags used by the Department of Defense (DoD) be made in America, and has also called on President Obama to adopt the same "Buy American" policies for athletic footwear that is already in place for combat boots, service shoes, and other uniform items.

Legislation proposed by Sen. Brown in the *National Defense Authorization Act* has also enabled the Heath-Newark-Licking County Port Authority to reestablish its designation as a Small Business Administration HUBZone through 2015. Renewed HUBZone status will strengthen the Heath-Newark-Licking County Port Authority's already strong record of expanding businesses, creating jobs, and increasing opportunities for Licking County's businesses and skilled workforce. The designation will also help bring hundreds of jobs to the region. Following a four-year effort to bring additional resources to Licking County, the renewed status will give small businesses, and businesses that employ residents of the area, better access to federal benefits and opportunities.

Protecting Ohio's Military Manufacturing Jobs

Sen. Brown is a strong supporter of Ohio's manufacturing industry and sees the state's military assets as critical to the nation's national security and the state's economy. That is why he proposed legislation to ensure that the Joint Systems Manufacturing Center in Lima would receive \$90 million in funding for the M1A2 Abrams Tank program. In February 2013, Sen. Brown met with then Secretary of Defense nominee Sen. Chuck Hagel to discuss the importance

of the program, the need for continued production, and how critical the production of the M1A2 Abrams Tank is to the nation's security and Northwest Ohio's economy.

Strengthening Ohio's Military Bases

Ohio possesses a unique mix of active, reserve, and Guard units that make it critical to America's defense. Sen. Brown understands the importance of Ohio's military epicenters in protecting the state and the nation. With that in mind, he carried out several initiatives in 2013 to promote growth at Ohio's bases while protecting Ohio military jobs.

Obtaining New Resources for Camp Ravenna

Sen. Brown worked to secure \$5.2 million in federal resources for the Camp Ravenna Joint Military Training Center. Funding will go towards extending the Ravenna water and sewer line that is critical to growth and expansion at Camp Ravenna.



Promoting Growth at the Springfield Air National Guard Base

The efforts of Sen. Brown have helped Springfield Air National Guard Base (ANGB) receive \$7.2 million in critical federal resources for the construction of a new intelligence operations facility, which will help secure the long-term viability of the base.

Fighting for Rickenbacker

Sen. Brown, working with his Ohio colleagues in the House and Senate, sent a letter to then Secretary of the Air Force Donley and Air Force Chief of Staff General Welsch expressing their strong support for the Rickenbacker Air Guard Station and Sen. Brown's belief that the base is well positioned for growth and expansion.

Sen. Brown also pressed then Secretary of the Air Force nominee Deborah Lee James on the issue of Rickenbacker, further calling on the Obama Administration to expand the mission at Rickenbacker Air National Guard Base.

Maintaining a Mansfield Air National Guard Base Mission

Sen. Brown announced that the Mansfield Air National Guard will receive a new mission and eight C-130H planes from the Air Force, resulting in the creation of over 180 jobs for the base. Sen. Brown was instrumental in keeping the Mansfield base open and is working to see that it receive new planes and ensure that President Obama kept his word to find it a new mission. In February, Sen. Brown met with then Secretary of Defense (DOD) nominee Sen. Hagel, pressing him on his support for a new mission at the Mansfield base and reminding him of President Obama's commitment to finding it a new mission.

Standing up for Youngstown Air Reserve Station

In a meeting with then Secretary of the Air Force nominee Deborah Lee James, Sen. Brown emphasized the importance of protecting critical missions and resources at the Youngstown Air Reserve Station (YARS). Sen. Brown highlighted Ohio's rich history as a leader in the aviation

and aerospace industries, saying that much of that leadership begins at YARS, and promised to continue working with the administration to maintain YARS's critical role in America's military infrastructure.

Protecting Critical Work at Wright-Patterson

Sen. Brown also spoke with then nominee Deborah Lee James about the critical research and development programs at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Sen. Brown discussed Wright-Patterson's critical role in developing next-generation technologies while supporting regional industry and economic development. Sen. Brown continues to work with the administration to protect the vital work being done at Wright-Patterson.

Advocating for the our Nation's Servicemembers

Ending the War in Afghanistan and Bringing Our Troops Home

In a letter to President Obama, Sen. Brown called for the swift and orderly withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan. After a decade of heroic efforts by American troops, Sen. Brown believes it is time to remove U.S. military forces from Afghanistan and for the Afghan government to take the lead in providing its citizenry with effective security. This will allow the U.S. government to shift its focus to rebuilding our economy and creating jobs here at home, reuniting more service members with their families, and continuing to support those service members as they adjust to post-deployment life.

In June 2011, Sen. Brown joined several of his Senate colleagues in calling on President Obama to authorize a sustained withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan. He also cosponsored a proposed amendment to the *National Defense Authorization Act* (NDAA) for the Fiscal Year 2012 that required President Obama to submit a plan to Congress for the expedited withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan.

The NDAA for Fiscal Year 2013 addresses the critical transition period in Afghanistan by focusing on building the Afghan National Security Forces. It requires presidential notification of any change in U.S. force level in Afghanistan and imposes reporting requirements on insider attacks and the certification and vetting process of the Afghan Security Forces on installations where U.S. Forces are present.

Co-Chairing the Senate Air Force Caucus

Sen. Brown was named co-chair of the U.S. Senate Air Force Caucus in April 2013 and will work to support the servicemen and women who dedicate themselves each and every day to protect us all. Formed in the summer of 1998, the Caucus currently consists of a bipartisan group of Senators concerned with issues affecting the United States Air Force.

The caucus sponsors briefings, base visits, and meetings with the Chief of Staff of the Air Force. Sen. Brown will dedicate his time as co-chair to improving the lives of service members, their families, and their communities.

Addressing Sexual Assault in the Military

The *Combating Military Sexual Assault Act* would prosecute sexual assault offenders to the full extent of the law and help survivors by setting up counseling programs. Sexual assaults are an unacceptable problem in the military and society as a whole. Sen. Brown knows that we need to address these problems with legislation that is comprehensive, lasting, and reflective of our values as a country.

Recognizing Aerospace Achievements

Honoring Ohioan Dr. Abe Silverstein

Sen. Brown sent a letter to President Obama recommending the late Dr. Abe Silverstein of Fairview Park, Ohio for the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Abe Silverstein was an early space pioneer whose intelligence, hard work, and leadership laid the foundation for scientific discoveries that continue to enrich our nation and the world. Dr. Silverstein died in 2001 at age 92. He worked at the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, which later became the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), where he designed the first supersonic wind tunnels.



The Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor, is presented to individuals who have made unique and lasting cultural, business, scientific, or humanitarian contributions to the United States and democracy around the world.

Supporting NASA Glenn's Mission

Sen. Brown congratulated NASA Glenn Research Center (GRC) on a successful spacecraft test in the world's largest vacuum chamber at the Plum Brook facility in Sandusky. Sen. Brown has long supported the NASA Glenn Research Center and efforts to ensure its full utilization. In January 2012, he sent a letter to NASA Administrator Bolden urging him to support a proposed partnership between GRC and the European Space Agency (ESA) that would help ensure that the Plum Brook facility in Sandusky is fully utilized.

Thanks to Sen. Brown, a Senate bill passed in 2010 preserved civil servant jobs at GRC for the next three years. Earlier that year, an effort to eliminate aeronautics research and development from NASA's mission was stripped on the Senate floor also as a result of his leadership.

Sen. Brown was also able to announce a new partnership between NASA and GE Aviation, an Ohio-based aeronautics manufacturing firm that is a subsidiary of General Electric. The new partnership makes GE Aviation one of six companies to pursue joint research with NASA's Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate on composite materials.

Foreign Policy & Homeland Security

Advocating for Peace and Nuclear Disarmament

Fighting to Prevent a Nuclear Iran

In February, Sen. Brown cosponsored a resolution that called for full implementation of U.S. and international sanctions against Iran and also urged President Obama to continue to strengthen enforcement of sanctions. Later, Sen. Brown joined a bipartisan group of senators on a resolution urging President Obama to ramp up his Administration's efforts to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons. Sen. Brown believes that imposing economic and financial sanctions on Iran is essential to preventing Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons.

Working for a Peaceful Middle East

In advance of a March trip by President Obama to the Middle East, Sen. Brown joined with Senate colleagues to urge further efforts towards peace in that region. Sen. Brown knows that the path to peace in the Middle East remains elusive and that there are a number of important and complicated issues that all parties must deal with before both can reach a comprehensive peace agreement. Sen. Brown believes that the United States must do everything it can to support those who seek peace.

As the peace process continues, Sen. Brown will continue working with his Senate colleagues and President Obama to advance the cause of a permanent peace agreement for the region.

Supporting Israel

Sen. Brown continued his strong support for Israel when he spoke with Ohio leaders from the American Israel Public Affairs Committee during a March meeting in Washington, D.C. Throughout his career in public service, Sen. Brown's support for Israel has been unshakeable. Given Israel's unique position as the U.S.'s closest ally in the region, Sen. Brown has consistently supported U.S. foreign aid to Israel, encouraged direct negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians, sought robust efforts to contain Iran and prevent it from obtaining nuclear weapons, and opposed any terrorist organization, such as Hamas, from joining the Palestinian Government. As change sweeps the Middle East, Sen. Brown knows that support for Israel is more important than ever.

In 2012, Sen. Brown cosponsored a bipartisan Senate resolution reaffirming Israel's right to self-defense. The Senate resolution, originally introduced by Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand of New York expresses vigorous support and unwavering commitment to the welfare, security, and survival of the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state with secure borders, and recognizes and strongly supports its right to act in self-defense to protect its citizens against acts of terrorism.

Fighting for Nuclear Disarmament

Sen. Brown called on President Obama to craft a robust nuclear policy that includes reducing the nuclear arsenal, safeguarding nuclear materials, and ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Sen. Brown supports robust efforts to ensure that nuclear weapons are never

again used as instruments of war, and he supports passing the CTBT. The CTBT would outlaw further nuclear testing and has been endorsed by nearly every nation in the world, including the United States, Russia, and China. However, until the United States, China, and other key nations ratify the treaty, the CTBT will not formally enter into force.

Sen. Brown cosponsored legislation to designate October 30, 2013 as a national day of remembrance for nuclear weapons programs' workers.

Ensuring a Safer World, Free of Cluster Bombs

The *Cluster Munitions Civilian Protection Act*, cosponsored by Sen. Brown, would restrict the sale and use of cluster bombs. Sen. Brown believes that the time has come to eliminate the production, use, and export of these weapons as a high proportion of the victims of cluster bombs are civilians who are maimed or killed after the military conflict has passed. Sen. Brown believes we cannot allow these tragedies to continue.

In June 2008, Sen. Brown cosponsored a resolution in the 110th Congress calling on the Bush Administration to sign the Convention on Cluster Munitions, an agreement to stop producing and using cluster munitions and eliminate stockpiles within eight years. He was also a proud cosponsor of other measures that aimed to end the use of cluster bombs, including the *Cluster Munitions Civilian Protection Act of 2009* which proposed restrictions on the sale, transfer, and use of cluster munitions, and the *Cluster Munitions Civilian Protection Act of 2011*, which would have limited the use of cluster munitions.



Global Anti-Terrorism Efforts

Compensating Ohio Families of Pan American Flight 73

Seven Ohio families are still waiting for compensation from those responsible for the terrorist attack on Pan American Flight 73. While the United States and Libya had previously negotiated a settlement resolving many outstanding lawsuits from victims of the attacks, the agreement provided no compensation for naturalized American citizens. To rectify this, Sen. Brown sent a letter to Secretary of State Kerry in February regarding this situation.

Serving the Families Affected by the 1972 Summer Olympics Terrorist Attacks

In a separate February letter to Secretary of State Kerry, Sen. Brown called for greater efforts towards securing compensation for the families of the 1972 Summer Olympic terrorist attacks. American David Berger and 11 members of the Israeli Olympic team were killed in that attack, and the victims and their families have not yet received adequate compensation from those responsible. Sen. Brown believes that seeking justice and compensation for victims of global terrorism sends a powerful message to those who may be seeking to act similarly.

Raising Awareness to Human Rights Injustices

Working to Restore Russian Adoptions

Each year, thousands of American families open up their arms to foreign-born children through the process of adoption. Sen. Brown believes that adoption can have an amazing impact on a child's life by offering opportunities and compassion that they may not otherwise have. In recent years, Russia has been the United States' third most popular country to adopt from, providing over 45,000 children since 1999. Unfortunately, in December 2013 the Russian Government signed into law what is considered a politically-driven, retaliatory piece of legislation that will end American families' ability to adopt children from Russia.



To express his disappointment in this international dispute, Sen. Brown joined over 70 other senators and representatives in signing letters to both President Obama and Russian President Putin urging them to work toward a bilateral solution that will, at least, allow pending adoption cases to be completed before the law takes full effect. Sen. Brown will continue to monitor this situation closely and urge the Administration to make the adoption ban a priority when engaging with Russia's government.

Working for the Protection of Chinese Activists

Sen. Brown, chair the bipartisan Congressional-Executive Commission on China, wrote a letter to President Obama calling for the release of Pen Ming, a human rights activist imprisoned in China. Sen. Brown noted that the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has declared Mr. Ming's imprisonment to be "in violation of his internationally recognized rights to freedom of expression and association," and Sen. Brown believes that Mr. Ming's imprisonment in China is a travesty of justice. Mr. Ming is a peaceful advocate for the environment, human rights, and democracy, and this is why Sen. Brown called on President Obama to discuss the case with Chinese President Jinping when the two leaders meet. Mr. Ming's daughter is a high school student in Shaker Heights.

Protecting Journalists and Free Speech in the Media

On December 11, 2013, Sen. Brown convened a meeting of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) to call on the Chinese government to immediately cease its policy of harassing foreign journalists, denying and delaying their visas, and blocking the websites of foreign media in China.

Chinese officials delayed renewing the visas for 23 journalists working for The New York Times and Bloomberg, effectively threatening these media's ability to report in China. In addition, access in China to The New York Times and Bloomberg web sites was blocked after they published articles detailing the wealth of the relatives of China's leaders.

In November, Chinese officials denied a visa to Paul Mooney, an American journalist who was preparing to start a new position in China with Reuters. Mooney had spent the past 18 years in

China reporting on environmental problems, Tibet, Xinjiang, the plight of human rights activists, and kidnapped children among other stories.

Protecting American Businesses through Currency Exchange Reform

On June 25, 2013, Sen. Brown chaired a Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) hearing entitled, “Chinese Hacking: Impact on Human Rights and Commercial Rule of Law” to examine the impact of Chinese cyber-attacks on American businesses and the human rights community. As China pursues indigenous innovation policies aimed at boosting Chinese companies and creating national champions, cyber-attacks from China have increased, leading to enormous losses to U.S. jobs, intellectual property (IP), and economic competitiveness.

Sen. Brown has long fought to prevent human rights violations and to protect American workers when China refuses to play by the rules. Earlier in June, following new figures that show a 34 percent jump over last month’s U.S.-China trade deficit, Sen. Brown introduced the *Currency Exchange Rate Oversight Reform Act of 2013*, bipartisan legislation that would reform and enhance oversight of currency exchange rates. Specifically, the bill would use U.S. trade law to counter the economic harm to U.S. manufacturers caused by currency manipulation and provide consequences for countries that fail to adopt appropriate policies to eliminate currency misalignment.

Veterans

As a senior member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the only Ohio senator to complete a full term on the Committee, Sen. Brown remains committed to ensuring that our nation's veterans receive the benefits they have earned.

Ensuring Veterans Receive the Benefits They Have Earned

Working to Reduce the VA Backlog

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) completed a record-breaking 1 million claims per year in 2010, 2011, and 2012. Yet the number of claims received continues to exceed the number processed. In 2013, Ohio's veterans were found to have waited 16 days longer than the 262 day national average.

Sen. Brown traveled the state in August calling on the VA to make immediate and necessary changes in order to eliminate its backlog. He also announced his support of two key pieces of legislation aimed at addressing the backlog.

The *Claims Processing Improvement Act of 2013* would hold the VA accountable by requiring it to publically report information on both its projected monthly goals and actual production so that Congress and the public knows if the VA is working toward eliminating its backlog. The bill would also establish a task force to hire and train claims processors and develop tactics to attack and eliminate the backlog.

He also introduced the *Veterans Services Outreach Act*, legislation that would require the VA to notify veterans filing claims electronically that they can receive help and important time-saving information that could significantly reduce their wait time. In advance of Memorial Day, the VA announced a new initiative modeled after Sen. Brown's legislation to reduce the disability claims backlog. And in November, elements of Sen. Brown's *Veterans Services Outreach Act* were incorporated into the *Veterans Health Care Eligibility and Enhancement Act of 2013*, which was passed by the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs.

Providing Greater Access to Education Benefits for Veterans

Our veterans have been made a promise that if they defend our country in military service, we will provide them with the benefits they have earned. In March, following meetings with several Ohio veterans groups in Washington, Sen. Brown introduced two pieces of legislation to help expand access to educational opportunities for veterans.

The *GI Bill STEM Bump Up Act* would provide additional support and incentives for veterans pursuing degrees in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) by granting additional funds for students majoring in these particular fields that often require costlier textbooks and equipment.

Sen. Brown also introduced legislation to amend the Yellow Ribbon Program (YRP) guidelines to allow recipients of the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship to also apply for

the YRP. The Fry Scholarship specifically gives education benefits to children of servicemembers who die in the line of duty after Sept. 10, 2001. Eligible children are entitled to 36 months of benefits but currently are not eligible for the Yellow Ribbon Program. The Yellow Ribbon Program allows educational institutions to make additional funds available to veterans without affecting their overall level of GI benefits. Institutions that voluntarily enter into an agreement with the VA choose the amount of tuition and fees that will be contributed. For example, a \$5,000 scholarship from the school is matched by \$5,000 from the VA, which then issues payment directly to the institution. This is especially helpful for veterans and dependents who attend private schools with higher tuition rates.

Sen. Brown successfully passed the expansion of the Yellow Ribbon Program, along with several other education and training initiatives for veterans during committee consideration of the *Veterans Health and Benefits Improvement Act of 2013*. These included:

- Reauthorization of the VA's Work-Study Program, which would expand the program to allow veterans to work in congressional offices to conduct outreach and to provide constituent services for servicemembers, veterans, and their families.
- A two-year renewal of the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP), which was created by the *VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011*.

Helping Veterans Find Employment

Veterans who serve their country in order to protect our freedoms deserve every opportunity to find work when they come home. They are among our most talented civilians but are too often unable to get credentialed for the training they've received. That is why, in October, Sen. Brown announced his support for the *Troop Talent Act of 2013*, which would ensure a clearer and easier path to matching military skills with civilian accreditation. Sen. Brown emphasized the legislation is the right thing to do for our military men and women and would strengthen our country's workforce while lowering its unemployment rate.

The *Troop Talent Act of 2013* would help veterans to better utilize the skills they have acquired in the military to find full-time employment when they transition back to civilian life. Specifically, the legislation would:

- Improve the translation of military skill sets to civilian credentials or licenses by providing earlier and more frequent information to servicemembers during their military careers about earning a civilian credential that matches their specialty training. The bill would also encourage the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) to provide more information to credentialing organizations about military training and education to better ensure that specific military skills receive appropriate civilian credentials.
- Prevent credential fraud by establishing strict standards for programs that guarantee a credential after successful completion. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) would also reestablish a committee to ensure efficiency, productivity, and legitimacy in the credentialing process for both servicemembers and taxpayers.

- Increase access to high-demand career fields for servicemembers by expanding the current DoD credentialing program. DoD has established a pilot program that attempts to match the skills of servicemembers for various jobs and fields including aircraft mechanics, automotive mechanics, health care professionals, supply and logistics personnel, and truck drivers. The bill would expand the program to include information technology (IT), one of the fastest growing fields in the country with a high demand for skilled workers.

Protecting Veterans' Cost-of-Living-Adjustment

Sen. Brown cosponsored a veterans' cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), which passed the Committee on Veterans Affairs in 2013. The provision would ensure that veterans with service-connected disabilities and their dependents would receive compensation equal to the current cost-of-living adjustment for Social Security beneficiaries. It is projected that more than 4.2 million veterans and survivors will receive compensation benefits during the next fiscal year.

The *Veterans' COLA Act of 2013* would: give veterans and their families an extra \$500 in benefits for the 2013 year; adjust cost-of-living rates for more than 4 million veterans and their families to guarantee that their benefits grow along with inflation hikes; increase disability compensation for veterans and dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses and children; and adjust to allow disabled veterans accepting clothing allotments to use the benefits of Veterans' COLA.

Giving VA Employees Collective Bargaining Rights

Sen. Brown also introduced legislation to allow for collective bargaining for Title 38 employees in the Veterans Health Administration. Currently, VA registered nurses and medical professionals are prohibited from collectively bargaining to negotiate routine pay issues, such as overtime pay and performance pay. Sen. Brown's bill would lift that prohibition and provide workers with rights to negotiate on these issues. This provision was passed by the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs in November as part of the *Veterans Health Care Eligibility and Enhancement Act of 2013*.

Working to Provide the Best Healthcare for Veterans

In December, Sen. Brown introduced legislation to allow medical professionals to better access continual medical education on conditions common to veterans and family members of veterans. The provision would establish a continuing medical education program within the VA for these professionals to access in order to increase their knowledge of veterans' health issues.

Seeking an End to Veteran Homelessness

In September, Sen. Brown and Rep. Marcy Kaptur introduced the *State Veterans Home Homelessness Act*, legislation to keep Erie County veterans off the street and give them the resources to get back on their feet. The bill would benefit the Sandusky State Veterans Home by making it and other state veterans' homes eligible for VA homelessness grants. Despite the high need of local veterans and available beds in the Sandusky home, VA homelessness grants are not currently available to state veterans' homes. The Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs

included elements of Sen. Brown's *Veterans Home Homelessness Act* in the *Veterans Health Care Eligibility and Enhancement Act of 2013*, which was passed by the committee in November.

Honoring Our Brave Servicemembers

It is no surprise that Ohio is home to some of our nation's bravest servicemembers. In 2013, Sen. Brown worked to ensure that we as a country properly honor our brave men and women in uniform. He cosponsored legislation to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the World War II members of the Civil Air Patrol. These brave men and women provided extraordinary public and combat services during a critical time of need for our nation. Amendments to the *National Defense Authorization Act* proposed by Sen. Brown will also ensure that Congressional gold medals are awarded to next of kin surviving family members when a service man or woman falls in the line of duty.

In November, the Senate passed Sen. Brown's legislation honoring the "Doolittle Tokyo Raiders" for their heroic service during World War II. The long overdue consideration awarded these brave men with a Congressional Gold Medal for their service to the United States and their valor in conducting the bombings in Tokyo.



Sen. Brown also cosponsored a bill to add Vietnam Veterans Day as a patriotic and national observance in order to honor the service and heroic sacrifice of those Americans who served during the Vietnam War.

In Touch with Ohioans

Sen. Brown is working to ensure that Ohioans stay informed of important issues as well as of his work in Congress and across the state. He has travelled to all of Ohio's 88 counties and held more than 200 roundtables across our state.

His website <http://brown.senate.gov> includes interactive resources for Ohioans to directly access services, find information on issues and legislation, and learn the latest news from Sen. Brown's activities across Ohio and in Congress. He also sends e-newsletters, weekly columns, and regional updates that address issues important to Ohioans and collect their input and ideas. You can sign up for both regional and issue-specific newsletters through his website at <http://www.brown.senate.gov/newsletter>.

You can also hear directly from Sen. Brown on Twitter by following his @SenSherrodBrown account or viewing his profile at <http://twitter.com/SenSherrodBrown>. Ohioans can watch videos of Sen. Brown or listen to remarks on hot button issues on his YouTube page <http://www.youtube.com/user/SherrodBrownOhio>

If you have any questions for Sen. Brown, please do not hesitate to contact him using the form on <http://www.brown.senate.gov/contact>.

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